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The Nation.

February 28, 1981 $1

EDITORIAL

REAGAN'S BUDGET

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher recently observed from her straitened little island that, happily, she and Ronald Reagan "shared the same views on extremely important matters." How right she is! The President's budgetary blueprint lifts Anglo-American friendship to economic twinship: deregulation, tight lid on the money supply, cutbacks in social programs and affluent people's taxes. Reagan's 10 percent tax cuts translate into an average saving by 1984 of $30,000 for lucky souls with incomes of $200,000 or more, and $350 for the many Americans making $15,000.

The President did suggest a few crimps in his friends' high life. The nibbling away at dairy subsidies, synfuels and Export-Import Bank borrowing authority was bad news for affluent Reagan folks. But the great bulk of the cuts afflicted the usual victims—CETA workers, the unemployed, food stamp and Medicaid clients and hard-pressed cities dependent upon mass transportation funds, welfare subsidies, etc.

Reagan's economic blueprint was as shapely as a sonnet, but he left out the crucial lines about its being a huge transfer from the poor to the rich, from social spending to the Pentagon, from the Frost Belt to the Sun Belt. The program carries within it the seeds of its own defeat, however. At best, the tax cuts will evoke additional demand long before new investments can enlarge the supply of goods. "Basic necessities" inflation—energy, housing, medical care and food—was ignored. The jump in defense spending is itself highly inflationary. The tax breaks for the wealthy will not produce miracles of new energy and investment. And by postponing the budgetary battle to the next fiscal year and delaying personal income tax cuts to July 1, the President may dissipate the political momentum he now has and needs to pass his program.

THE FAURISSON AFFAIR
Noam Chomsky

DONOVAN AND THE MOB
Samuel Dillon

JAPANESE MASKS
Donald Kirk

INSURANCE CO. WINDFALL
James Gannon

MARY GORDON
William O'Rourke

ULTRA-RIGHT TELEVISION
David L. Aasen

THE INVISIBLE DEATH (PART I)

THE FIRST CASUALTY AT T.M.I.

ERNEST J. STERNGLASS

A few minutes after ten o'clock on Wednesday morning, March 28, 1979, I was sitting in my study trying to understand the full implications of what I had learned during a weeklong trial in Philadelphia. At issue in the trial was the degree of genetic damage done to the soldiers who had been marched under the highly radioactive clouds during the Nevada tests back in the 1950s. Just as I was trying to sort out my thoughts on the discovery of the large doses the men had received by breathing in the dust and gases, the telephone rang.

It was a reporter from radio station WPLR in New Haven. He wanted to know my reaction to a news bulletin that had just come over the wire, according to which a general emergency had been announced at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. My thoughts immediately turned to the possibility that right here in Pennsylvania, where the first commercial nuclear reactor had been built with so much hope, we might also experience the first meltdown and catastrophic release of radioactive gases about which a growing number of concerned s i tists had tried to warn the public for years. Apparently, radiation levels inside the Three Mile Island containment building were still rising, and there were fragmentary reports of radioactive gas releases taking place, leading to above-normal radiation readings near the site, located some ten miles south of the city of Harrisburg on the Susquehanna River.

I wondered which way the winds were blowing. To the north, toward the densely populated metropolitan area? I called the U.S. Weather

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LETTERS.

MORE COMMENTS ON 'PROTEST AND SURVIVE'

Washington, D.C.
I think E. P. Thompson's article ["A Letter to America," *The Nation,* Jan. 24] is one of the most commanding and important pieces I have read in a long while. I wish every American could read it.

I regard *The Nation* as a vital, highly important magazine. I only wish you had a larger readership. *George McGovern*

Washington, D.C.
Congratulations for publishing E. P. Thompson's essay. In subject, style and importance, it ranks with John Hersey's *Hiroshima.* *Jack Beatty*

Gstaad, Switzerland
E. P. Thompson's "A Letter to America" is a good and compelling document, and *The Nation* does a service in publishing it. The problem of nuclear annihilation, as I've discovered in involving myself in the issue, is that people of normal aspect and concern do not wish to think about it. It is simply too awful for the normal mind; better get back to inflation. So the subject becomes a monopoly or partial monopoly of the Strangelove-Iron Mountain mentality. We couldn't leave the matter in more dangerous hands, and this must not continue. You have taken a most useful step in getting this issue to the attention of rational minds. I hope all who read it will be motivated to speak and act. It's the question, after all, of whether we, our children and our grandchildren will live.

John Kenneth Galbraith

New York City
Since last June I have been collecting articles of opinion regarding the probability of nuclear warfare. By the end of the year I felt convinced (*1*) that elected leaders are incapable of effecting disarmament, (*2*) that we are closer to nuclear exchange than when the "Harvard Report" warned of its inevitability in 1975, (*3*) that nuclear disarmament will occur only as a result of a unilateral effort led by the people of the United States.

Until your January 24 issue I felt benumbed at how a significant effort in the United States could ever be mounted. It will be enormously difficult in any case, but at least E. P. Thompson has drawn up a charter from which an effort could be launched. I am most grateful to him and to you.

Your magazine could hardly be expected to become a clearinghouse for coordinating a grass-roots national effort to arouse consciousness of the logic of Thompson's essay. But perhaps centers of effort already exist in the United States modeled upon the experience of "European Nuclear Disarmament" as described in the essay. If there are (or there are others with clear views comparable to those of Thompson), surely many readers of *The Nation* would be grateful for a listing. Although I should like to help convert "rhetoric to action" I would need all the support of others I could get.

Further, those many readers would need the help of a scenario to succeed Thompson's effort: an analysis of all the common arguments against unilateral disarmament and their refutation upon a basis that, whatever the probable sacrifices required, we could at least live with them as a human race. I would hope that one of your competent contributors would do that soon.

The Rev. James N. Studer
Chaplain, St. Mary's Hospital

Cincinnati
The editors of *The Nation* are to be warmly congratulated for having published E. P. Thompson's notable "A Letter to America." The essay is an incisive and closely reasoned analysis of the increased danger of nuclear war resulting from current efforts to attain nuclear superiority. Professor Thompson does what much of contemporary "informed" American journalism refuses to do; he conveys a clear understanding of the mind-set of the many Europeans who are not eager to serve as pawns in American global strategy. Relevant to both American and European intellectuals is his challenge of the stylish posture of avoiding politics as a nasty, unpleasant business not worth any distraction from work in the laboratory or library. All Thompson asks is that we examine the deformities of our culture and that we publicly demur. Based on the convincing evidence he furnishes we would have to be suicidal not to.

I would only add that those opposed to the drift toward war have more going for them than might be inferred from Thompson's analysis. The campaign to extend further nuclear arms to Western Europe is not an expression of American resolve or confidence but rather of desperation which encourages reckless action to break European commitment to détente. Behind the push for more nuclear arms is a tacit recognition that Europe has its own set of interests and must therefore be dragooned into becoming a nuclear hostage so that the United States might escape relatively unscathed from a nuclear exchange. What real strength is there in an American policy which first sold the idea of the Pershing missiles as a needed accompaniment to SALT II, then turned around and blocked the SALT treaty and now offers the American people and the world the lunacy of the MX? The basic reality of current American policy is its tendency toward adventurism, based on the perception that the American world position is slipping, and yet the adventurism can only compound the isolation. This policy, so long as it is unchecked, is terribly dangerous but it is based on profound political weakness.

Another factor also works for peace, and that is the continuing Soviet interest in détente and limiting the arms race. The Russians do not seem to conjure up such dreams as nuclear war without property damage, or waste time discussing what are "acceptable" losses. The realism of a policy of peaceful coexistence has long been a hallmark of Soviet foreign policy, and the Soviet leadership most likely will continue to make life difficult for the anti-Communist zealots who want us to believe we cannot have equitable agreements to stem the arms race. *Herbert Shapiro*

Minneapolis
E. P. Thompson's "A Letter to America" is excellent throughout, especially the latter part, "Protest—to Survive," which offers some suggestions as to what to do.

To avoid war, there should be a Congress of European States, at which Europe should declare its independence of the United States. Included in that independence could also be a moratorium on indebtedness of European nations to American banks such as Chase Manhattan, Bank of America, J. P. Morgan & Company and others.

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EDITORIALS.

Reporter Licenses

The brouhaha at the UNESCO meeting in Paris last week over licensing journalists ended in the usual impasse. East was still East and West still West. The twain had violently parted when the Eastern bloc and Third World countries backed a proposal to license journalists. The Western side swiftly charged that the power to license is the power to control reporters and thus manage the news coming out of these countries.

Although the issue loosed freshets of hypocrisy on both sides, the West, being on the receiving end of the resolution, displayed the most self-righteousness. *The New York Times*, for example, editorially huffed that if this was the new information order, then the West should take a permanent walk from UNESCO's deliberations.

The licensing plan originally offered up (which was actually written by a University of North Paris political scientist) ostensibly is intended to "reduce the risks" to journalists on dangerous assignments in foreign countries by enabling them to identify themselves. But it is also intended to "insure" that they "conform to the generally accepted rules of professional ethics." Troubling questions about what—and whose—ethics immediately rise to mind, and Western journalists, putting it in the worst light, said in their counter-resolution that such a system "would require somebody to stipulate who should be entitled to claim such protection." Instead, the Western resolution continued, "all authorities should recognize and honor the credentials that journalists already possess that identify them."

Now, we are as opposed to the idea of licensing journalists as the next newsman or woman, but we are compelled to observe that the West's overreaction exemplifies a double standard that is too frequently applied to the Third World. We are all adults here. U.S. and foreign journalists covering last year's Presidential campaign were required to register and obtain a badge with an ID photo. We have one before us even as we write. It reads: "This credential is the property of the United States Government. Its counterfeiting, alteration or misuse is a violation of Section 499, Title 18, United States Code."

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Reporters wishing to cover momentous national events like Presidential press conferences or political conventions must apply for accreditation; they may be denied it. Smaller publications are doled out a quota of tickets for political conventions entitling them to sit in the peanut gallery, with limited floor-visitation privileges. Soviet newsmen here will find themselves barred from strategic sites, such as Pittsburgh, should their Government seal off Yakutsk to *The New York Times*. And as Information Minister Frank Campbell of Guyana (a country, it must be said, that is not a model of the beneficences of a government-controlled press) pointed out: "A journalist from Guyana wanting to go to the United States has to comply with normal visa requirements. Very often he is refused. But if we refuse a visa to a U.S. journalist, then it's a press freedom matter. Let's have universality."

We suspect that "universality" will not come in our day, if ever, but many of the backers of the new information order are trying to reform what they see as a monopoly of world news coverage by privately owned Western news agencies. The alternative they propose to this state of affairs revolves around a greater role for Third World governments. We have more faith in private than public enterprise when it comes to First Amendment issues, and so we are reluctant to accept the proposition that one man's freedom is another man's license. Instead, we look favorably upon organizations, like the newly formed Interlink, which plan to do for the Third World what the Associated Press and United Press International do for the rest of the world—namely, cover it. The failure of the twain to meet in Paris underscores the need for Western countries to stop patronizing the Third World and start trying to understand it.

Gun Stamps

Normally, we throw away broadsides from the National Rifle Association, but when one appeared in the guise of an article on *The New York Times* Op-Ed page recently, we thought we had better read it, especially since the author, Mark K. Benenson, is not only a life member of the N.R.A. but "a former chairman of the United States Section of Amnesty International." An official of the latter worthy organization might well persuade us that packing a Saturday night special was a matter of conscience.

Benenson invokes the Judeo-Christian ethic in support of the right of self-defense, which, he says, gun-control laws would abrogate. He is admittedly somewhat selective in his application of the J.-C.E. since he plays down the admonition to turn the other cheek as "only one socially correct response to attack" (sounds as though he's confusing Jesus with Amy Vanderbilt) and omits "Thou shalt not kill" entirely. But let it pass; we grant the right of self-defense. A murderer, Benenson goes on, is the product of a "lifelong series of concatenations and coincidences of environment, personality and experience. . . . The gun itself hardly matters." Hardly matters to whom, we wonder—to the more than 13,000 people who were killed by rifles and handguns in 1979? (A police chief in Indianapolis, discussing with a reporter the rise in homicides in that city last year, said that a remarkable number of shootings arose out of truly petty or imagined affronts—a kind of rising hairtrigger touchiness. One suspects that a convenient gun, rather than heredity and environment, was the main reason why such quarrels became lethal.)

Also, we are told, gun controls don't work. This contention ignores the experience of Britain, Japan and West Germany, all of which have strict gun-control laws. In Britain, according to Richard Weintraub in *The Washington Post*, the homicide rate is one-tenth what it is here and the London police fired guns only eight times in all of 1979. In Japan, there were only 171 crimes involving the use of guns in 1979 and in Germany, only sixty-nine.

Benenson's—and the N.R.A.'s—central argument is a familiar one: "Gun control, affecting only the law-abiding, removes the options, makes resistance futile, especially for women, and gives free rein to criminal violence." Now, aside from the fact that this argument has little to do with handgun-control laws, such as the bill introduced by Senator Edward M. Kennedy and Representative Peter Rodino, it envisions an armed society as the only alternative to rising crime rates. If the N.R.A. really believes that privately owned handguns are the answer, why don't they follow the argument to its logical conclusion? Let all the people with handguns stashed away carry their pieces openly strapped to their hips; the effect on the criminal element should be salutary. Also, an instant armed auxiliary police force would be created at no cost to the taxpayers, since they would be it. And why not take this worthy idea a step further and encourage the arming of *all* qualified law-abiding people? To this end, we propose a system of gun stamps, which could be redeemed at the nearest gun store for Saturday night specials.

The anti-gun nuts will ask how we can guarantee that only law-abiding citizens will be issued gun stamps. We propose a simple test: anyone who is (*a*) eligible to receive food stamps and/or *(b)* unemployed, is *not* eligible for gun stamps. Thus, only people who have something to defend —money, property, honor (poor people by definition have no self-respect)—will be issued a gun.

We realize that there are people who, out of laziness, misplaced softness, or fear, will refuse to bear arms. This raises a small problem, since a truly comprehensive vigilante band of good guys could only be created by making gun-toting compulsory, and legal compulsion is anathema to the N.R.A. We are convinced, however, that social pressure and moral suasion would be quite as effective as any law. The pacifists will eventually realize that by not carrying a prominently displayed gun, they become automatic suspects whenever they happen to be in the vicinity of a crime, and therefore liable to be shot on sight. Most Americans will be like Mark Twain in Virginia City, where, he said, there were so many guns around that he felt obliged to carry one so as not to feel conspicuous.

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Ex Parte Pratt

Only an act of judicial bravery and honesty will free another victim of COINTELPRO, former Black Panther Elmer (Geronimo) Pratt. Pratt's hopes for justice look much dimmer after a December 3, 1980, decision of a Court of Appeals denying his petition for a writ of *habeas corpus*.

For nearly ten years Geronimo Pratt has been in prison, falsely convicted, he says, by a Federal Bureau of Investigation-inspired frame-up for a 1968 robbery-slaying in Santa Monica, California. Pratt has always maintained he was in Oakland, 400 miles north, at the time of the shooting. The F.B.I. now admits that Pratt, once head of the Los Angeles Black Panthers, was targeted for "neutralization" by COINTELPRO at a time when J. Edgar Hoover's secret war on black dissidents left twenty-eight Panthers dead.

The new evidence that was heard by the Court of Appeals in Pratt's bid for a new trial revealed that the F.B.I. had planted two, possibly three, informants in the defense; the key prosecution witness, Julius Butler, lied on the stand when he denied being an F.B.I. informant (Butler testified that Pratt confessed the murder to him; his informant status raises serious doubts about his credibility); F.B.I. records exist which may confirm Pratt's alibi, and the name of a second suspect in the murder, which the Bureau revealed to the prosecution, was withheld from Pratt's trial counsel.

Yet a majority of the three-member court held that Pratt's attempt to win a new trial "follows the too often typical pattern in today's upside-down system of criminal justice where a defendant, himself charged with or convicted of such [*sic*] 'illegal acts,' such as murder, attempted murder and robbery . . . seeks to focus attention on the alleged 'illegal acts' of law-enforcement officers."

The lengthy opinion, written by Justice L. Thaxton Hanson and concurred in by Justice Mildred Lillie, relies on J. Edgar Hoover's description of the Panthers as a "militant violence-prone hate group" to confirm their belief that COINTELPRO was entirely justified in its crusade against the Panthers. Hanson finds that COINTELPRO and other F.B.I. abuses had no effect on Pratt's trial or its outcome: "The record indicates that the presence of COINTELPRO informants . . . had as much effect on whether or not Pratt was afforded a fair trial . . . as did the furniture in the areas where the discussions were conducted." And because "nowhere in the [Church committee] report is listed as a technique the 'framing' of a target . . . in order to 'neutralize' " him, it is implausible that the F.B.I. would have framed the former Black Panther.

"A defendant is only entitled to a fair trial," the majority holds, "not an absolutely perfect trial. 'Better that a hundred guilty men should go free than one innocent man be convicted,' is the rallying cry of the perfectionists. . . . The plain fact of the matter is that in human affairs we balance the cost of human life against other considerations. . . . The real question is one of relative values—is the end . . . worth the price it is likely to cost?" Indeed, what price justice?

The lone dissenter on the court, Justice William Dunn, wrote, "A trial which is not fundamentally fair is no trial at all. . . . If our trials lack fundamental fairness, then the price we pay for conviction is more costly than we may surmise—the loss of the foundation of any free society—untarnished administration of justice."

We can only hope the California Supreme Court—where the Pratt case now rests—will be struck by the spurious legal arguments of the majority, and by the depth of F.B.I. misconduct, and overturn this decision. As Justice David Davis said in *ex parte Milligan* more than 100 years ago, "A country preserved at the sacrifice of all the cardinal principles of liberty, is not worth the cost of preservation."

Postscript: The F.B.I. recently disclosed that the contents of a letter allegedly written by Butler were known to both the F.B.I. and the Los Angeles Police Department fourteen months before the latter originally said it "opened" the letter and "discovered" Butler's accusation implicating Pratt in the murder. The Butler letter was the foundation for Pratt's prosecution and the only corroboration of Butler's testimony. This delayed revelation is powerful evidence that Pratt's prosecution was, indeed, a frame-up. By the F.B.I.'s own admission, the Bureau was in daily contact with the L.A.P.D. "to warn police . . . of violations of criminal law by Black Panther Party members." Surely, had the contents of the letter been true and unfabricated, Pratt would have been immediately arrested and prosecuted. To say that at the height of the L.A.P.D.'s attempts to break the Panthers, the damning accusations in Butler's letter were ignored for fourteen months strains all credulity.

GREG GOLDIN

Greg Goldin is a Los Angeles-based writer who has been covering the Pratt case for two years.

Coming Up in The Nation

Philip Agee
(Author of *Inside the Company: CIA Diary*)

"Why I Named the Names"

Agee, whose unexpurgated exposés of Central Intelligence Agency methods and personnel overseas have put him in permanent hot water with the U.S. Government, explains why he decided to break Agency *omertà* and why he will continue his campaign. His article will be followed with critical appraisals by Thomas Emerson, Aryeh Neier, Thomas Powers, Frank Donner, Jean Bethke Elshtain and others. Next week, Ernest J. Sternglass's article concludes with his theory about radiation fallout from Three Mile Island and a correlative rise in infant mortality rates. And in a future issue Manning Marable, a leader of the National Black Independent Political Party, will offer his views on race and class.

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VARIATIONS.

CALVIN TRILLIN

Daddy, why is there a picture of the President's handwriting in *The New York Times*?

The White House wants to demonstrate that the President can, in fact, read and write. It makes the citizens feel more secure. Also, it's good for what they call "reassuring our allies." What kind of cereal do you want for breakfast—the stuff with a year's supply of thiamine hydrochloride or the stuff that has enough riboflavin to give you an out-of-body experience?

What do you mean about a picture of the President's handwriting reassuring our allies, Daddy?

Well, sometimes people like the French and the English and the Germans worry about the person who's President of the United States not being too bright—particularly since that state dinner in Paris when President Ford mistook Giscard d'Estaing for the headwaiter and asked him for some ketchup. They seem to think that a President who's not too bright might push the wrong button and incinerate Bulgaria or someplace and cause a lot of trouble for everyone.

Daddy, Mommy says that if you never give me a straight answer I might grow up to be a smart aleck like you.

All right. If you must know, the picture is supposed to demonstrate that the President wrote the first draft of his television speech all by himself—unless he copied it from an old Calvin Coolidge speech he found stuck back in one of the drawers in the White House. You see, some people keep saying that the President is just an actor who says whatever the people around him tell him to say, and, since the people around him are these rich old guys from California who own car dealerships and drugstore chains, if it isn't shown that he sometimes writes his own speeches people might worry that just when everyone expects him to talk about something like the State of the Union he'll start hawking Ford Fairlanes or announcing a special, for this week only, on hair spray.

Do you mean that the President is a retard?

If you happen to meet the French or English ambassadors, I really think it would be better not to use that word. It might upset them.

But Daddy, there's a spelling mistake in his first sentence.

Nobody's perfect.

"Tonight" isn't spelled t-o-n-i-t-e.

Well, it's very close. Many of the same letters. I'd like to come to the President's defense on that one.

Why are you defending him—just because you always have to ask Mommy how to spell "occurred"?

No, I am defending him because I give each President one free defense in the first month of his Administration, followed by three years and eleven months of underhanded, mean-spirited abuse. It's what I've tried to teach you about fair play.

I don't think that's really a very good defense—that a lot of the letters are the same. Do you?

Well, "tonight" is sometimes spelled that way on cue cards. Also in advertisements—like "Test the new Fairlan at our Long Beach or San Pedro showroom, both open til nine tonite."

But Daddy, "tonite" means a high explosive compounc of pulverized guncotton impregnated with barium nitrate.

What are you reading that from?

The *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Well, that definition is another little something I wouldn' mention to the French or English ambassadors. Could you just check the spelling of "occurred," by the way, as long as you have the book right there?

I really think the President should be able to spell.

We're living in an era of limited expectations.

Can the Vice President spell?

I have it on good authority that the Vice President is an excellent speller. Our friend John Cole says he used to sneak looks at the Vice President's paper during exams at Yale, and he was quite impressed with the Vice President's spelling. Also his handwriting. Very legible, John says, even from a distance. I think we can be reassured on that point. There's a first-rate speller right in the White House inner circle.

The President left some commas out in the second sentence. We get marked down for leaving out commas.

Look, let's get this in perspective. Punctuation and spelling aren't everything. If you put this in perspective, it isn't even so terrible that the man the President nominated for Deputy Secretary of State couldn't name the Prime Minister of South Africa.

You mean they gave him a quiz? How many did he get right?

He didn't get any right.

So what did they do to him?

They made him Deputy Secretary of State.

We get marked down for not getting any right.

Well, there's a feeling that the President ought to have his own team in there with him.

What do they call the team—the Slow Learners?

I do think you're getting to be a smart aleck. It must be all that riboflavin.

So go ahead and put it all in perspective.

Well, you see, the President wants efficient people like successful corporate executives on his team. Corporate executives don't need to spell or remember names; they have secretaries to do that. The Deputy Secretary of State would just say to his secretary, "Honey, get me the guy in charge of that big country at the bottom of Africa—the one where the coloreds are always causing trouble." Also, if you put this spelling business into even more perspective, simplified spelling like t-o-n-i-t-e is consistent with the President's approach to government. He says that the Federal Government has become much too complicated. The President wants everything to be simpler.

So do the slow learners in my class.

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ARTICLES.

THE FAURISSON AFFAIR

His Right To Say It

NOAM CHOMSKY

An article in *The New York Times* concerning my involvement in the "Faurisson affair" was headlined "French Storm in a Demitasse." If the intent was to imply that these events do not even merit being called "a tempest in a teapot," I am inclined to agree. Nevertheless, torrents of ink have been spilled in Europe, and some here. Perhaps, given the obfuscatory nature of the coverage, it would be useful for me to state the basic facts as I understand them and to say a few words about the principles that arise.

In the fall of 1979, I was asked by Serge Thion, a libertarian socialist scholar with a record of opposition to all forms of totalitarianism, to sign a petition calling on authorities to insure Robert Faurisson's "safety and the free exercise of his legal rights." The petition said nothing about his "holocaust studies" (he denies the existence of gas chambers or of a systematic plan to massacre the Jews and questions the authenticity of the Anne Frank diary, among other things), apart from noting that they were the cause of "efforts to deprive Professor Faurisson of his freedom of speech and expression." It did not specify the steps taken against him, which include suspension from his teaching position at the University of Lyons after the threat of violence, and a forthcoming court trial for falsification of history and damages to victims of Nazism.

The petition aroused considerable protest. In *Nouvel Observateur*, Claude Roy wrote that "the appeal launched by Chomsky" supported Faurisson's views. Roy explained my alleged stand as an attempt to show that the United States is indistinguishable from Nazi Germany. In *Esprit*, Pierre Vidal-Naquet found the petition "scandalous" on the ground that it "presented his 'conclusions' as if they were actually discoveries." Vidal-Naquet misunderstood a sentence in the petition that ran, "Since he began making his findings public, Professor Faurisson has been subject to. . . ." The term "findings" is quite neutral. One can say, without contradiction: "He made his findings public and they were judged worthless, irrelevant, falsified. . . ." The petition implied nothing about the quality of Faurisson's work, which was irrelevant to the issues raised.

Thion then asked me to write a brief statement on the purely civil libertarian aspects of this affair. I did so, telling him to use it as he wished. In this statement, I made it explicit that I would not discuss Faurisson's work, having only limited familiarity with it (and, frankly, little interest in it). Rather, I restricted myself to the civil-liberties issues and the implications of the fact that it was even necessary to recall Voltaire's famous words in a letter to M. le Riche: "I detest what you write, but I would give my life to make it possible for you to continue to write."

Faurisson's conclusions are diametrically opposed to views I hold and have frequently expressed in print (for example, in my book *Peace in the Middle East?*, where I describe the holocaust as "the most fantastic outburst of collective insanity in human history"). But it is elementary that freedom of expression (including academic freedom) is not to be restricted to views of which one approves, and that it is precisely in the case of views that are almost universally despised and condemned that this right must be most vigorously defended. It is easy enough to defend those who need no defense or to join in unanimous (and often justified) condemnation of a violation of civil rights by some official enemy.

I later learned that my statement was to appear in a book in which Faurisson defends himself against the charges soon to be brought against him in court. While this was not my intention, it was not contrary to my instructions. I received a letter from Jean-Pierre Faye, a well-known anti-Fascist writer and militant, who agreed with my position but urged me to withhold my statement because the climate of opinion in France was such that my defense of Faurisson's right to express his views would be interpreted as support for them. I wrote to him that I accepted his judgment, and requested that my statement not appear, but by then it was too late to stop publication.

Parts of my letter to Faye appeared in the French press and have been widely quoted and misquoted and subjected to fantastic interpretations. It was reported, for example, that I repudiated my comments after having learned that there is anti-Semitism in France, and that I was changing my views on the basis of clippings from the French press (in the same letter, I had asked Faye to send me clippings on another matter). My personal letter to Faye was incomprehensible to anyone who had not read Faye's original letter to me; a telephone call would quickly have clarified the facts.

The uproar that ensued is of some interest. In *Le Matin* (socialist), Jacques Baynac wrote that my fundamental error was to "defend, in the name of freedom of expression, the right to mock the facts"—"facts" determined, presumably, by some board of commissars or a reconstituted Inquisition. My lengthy discussion on the implications of this doctrine was excised from the occasionally recognizable version of the interview with me published in *Le Matin*. In *Le Monde*, the editor of *Esprit*, Paul Thibaud, wrote that I had condemned "the entire French intelligentsia," launching a

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"general accusation" against "*les Français,*" without qualifications. Alberto Cavallari, Paris correspondent for the *Corriere della Sera,* went further still, claiming that I had condemned all of "French culture." The article is notable for a series of fabricated quotes designed to establish this and other allegations. What I had written was that though I would make some harsh comments about "certain segments of the French intelligentsia . . . certainly, what I say does not apply to many others, who maintain a firm commitment to intellectual integrity. . . . I would not want these comments to be misunderstood as applying beyond their specific scope." Similar qualifications are removed from the doctored "interview" in *Le Matin*, enabling the editors to allege that I describe France as "totalitarian."

Cavallari went on to explain that my rage against "French culture" derives from its refusal to accept the theory that linguistics proves that "the Gulag descends directly from Rousseau" and other imbecile ideas he chooses to attribute to me for reasons best known to himself. In *Nouvel Observateur*, Jean-Paul Enthoven offers a different explanation: I support Faurisson because my "instrumentalist theory of language, this 'generative grammar' . . . does not allow the means to think of the unimaginable, that is, the holocaust." He and Cavallari, among others, explain further that my defense of Faurisson is a case of the extreme left joining the extreme right, a phenomenon to which they devote many sage words. In *Le Matin*, Catherine Clement explains my odd behavior on the ground that I am a "perfect Bostonian," "a cold and distant man, without real social contacts, incapable of understanding Jewish-American humor, which relies heavily on Yiddish." Pierre Daix explains in *Le Quotidien de Paris* that I took up left-wing causes to "clear myself" of the reactionary implications of my "innatism." And so on, at about the same level.

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To illustrate the caliber of discussion, after I had noted that Vidal-Naquet's comment cited above was based on a misunderstanding, he reprinted his article in a book (*Les Juifs*, F. Maspero), eliminating the passage I quoted and adding an appendix in which he claims falsely that "the error in question" had appeared only in an earlier draft, which I am accused of having illegitimately quoted. The example is, unfortunately, quite typical.

A number of critics (for example, Abraham Forman of the Anti-Defamation League in *Le Matin*) contend that the only issue is Faurisson's right to publish and that this has not been denied. The issue, however, is his suspension from the university because of threats of violence against him, and his court trial. It is of interest that his attorney, Yvon Chotard, who is defending him on grounds of freedom of expression and the right to an attorney of one's choice, has been threatened with expulsion from the anti-Fascist organization that is bringing Faurisson to trial.

As Faye predicted, many showed themselves incapable of distinguishing between defense of the right of free expression and defense of the views expressed—and not only in France. In *The New Republic*, Martin Peretz concluded from my expressed lack of interest in Faurisson's work that I am an "agnostic" about the holocaust and "a fool" about genocide. He claims further that I deny freedom of expression to my opponents, referring to my comment that one degrades oneself by entering into debate over certain issues. In short, if I refuse to debate you, I constrain your freedom. He is careful to conceal the example I cited: the holocaust.

Many writers find it scandalous that I should support the right of free expression for Faurisson without carefully analyzing his work, a strange doctrine which, if adopted, would effectively block defense of civil rights for unpopular views. Faurisson does not control the French press or scholarship. There is surely no lack of means or opportunity to refute or condemn his writings. My own views in sharp opposition to his are clearly on record, as I have said. No rational person will condemn a book, however outlandish its conclusions may seem, without at least reading it carefully; in this case, checking the documentation offered, and so on. One of the most bizarre criticisms has been that by refusing to undertake this task, I reveal that I have no interest in six million murdered Jews, a criticism which, if valid, applies to everyone who shares my lack of interest in examining Faurisson's work. One who defends the right of free expression incurs no special responsibility to study or even be acquainted with the views expressed. I have, for example, frequently gone well beyond signing petitions in support of East European dissidents subjected to repression or threats, often knowing little and caring less about their views (which in some cases I find obnoxious, a matter of complete irrelevance that I never mention in this connection). I recall no criticism of this stand.

The latter point merits further comment. I have taken far more controversial stands than this in support of civil liberties and academic freedom. At the height of the Vietnam War, I publicly took the stand that people I regard as authentic war criminals should not be denied the right to

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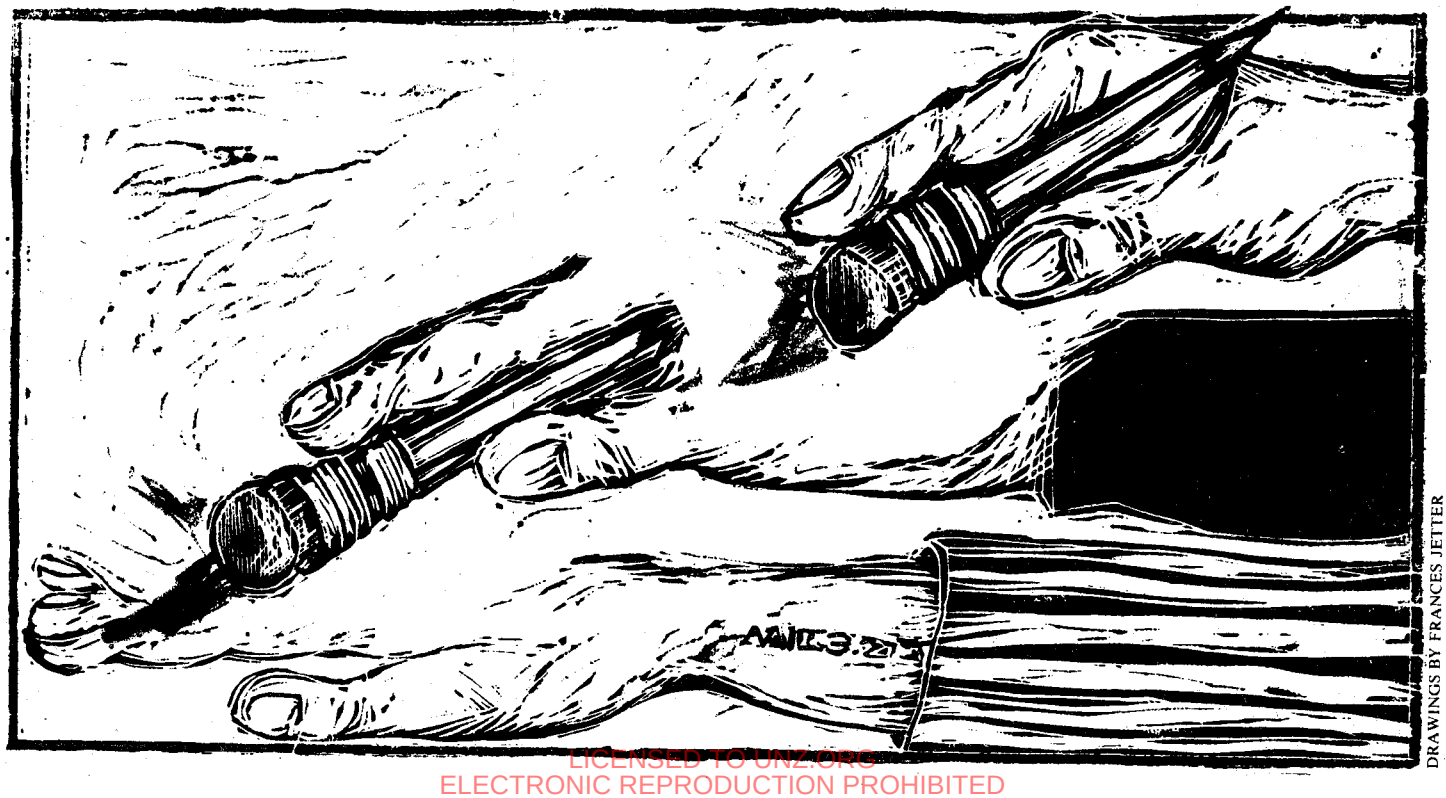
teach on political or ideological grounds, and I have always taken the same stand with regard to scientists who "prove" that blacks are genetically inferior, in a country where their history is hardly pleasant, and where such views will be used by racists and neo-Nazis. Whatever one thinks of Faurisson, no one has accused him of being the architect of major war crimes or claiming that Jews are genetically inferior (though it is irrelevant to the civil-liberties issue, he writes of the "heroic insurrection of the Warsaw ghetto" and praises those who "fought courageously against Nazism" in "the right cause"). I even wrote in 1969 that it would be wrong to bar counterinsurgency research in the universities, though it was being used to murder and destroy, a position that I am not sure I could defend. What is interesting is that these far more controversial stands never aroused a peep of protest, which shows that the refusal to accept the right of free expression without retaliation, and the horror when others defend this right, is rather selective.

The reaction of the PEN Club in Paris is also interesting. PEN denounces my statements on the ground that they have given publicity to Faurisson's writing at a time when there is a resurgence of anti-Semitism. It is odd that an organization devoted to freedom of expression for authors should be exercised solely because Faurisson's defense against the charges brought against him is publicly heard. Furthermore, if publicity is being accorded to Faurisson, it is because he is being brought to trial (presumably, with the purpose of airing the issues) and because the press has chosen to create a scandal about my defense of his civil rights. On many occasions, I have written actual prefaces and endorsements for books in France—books that are unread and unknown, as indeed is the case generally with my own writings. The latter fact is illustrated, for example, by Thibaud, who claims that I advocated "confiding Vietnamese freedom to the supposed good will of the leaders of the North." In fact, my writings on the war were overwhelmingly devoted to the U.S. attack on the peasant society of the South (and later Laos and Cambodia as well), which aimed to undermine the neutralization proposals of the National Liberation Front and others and to destroy the rural society in which the N.L.F. was based, and I precisely warned that success in this effort "will create a situation in which, indeed, North Vietnam will necessarily dominate Indochina, for no other viable society will remain."

Thibaud's ignorant falsifications point to one of the real factors that lie behind this affair. A number of these critics are ex-Stalinists, or people like Thibaud, who is capable of writing that prior to Solzhenitsyn, "every previous account" of "Sovietism" was within the Trotskyite framework (*Esprit*). Intellectuals who have recently awakened to the possibility of an anti-Leninist critique often systematically misunderstand a discussion of revolutionary movements and efforts to crush them that has never employed the assumptions they associate with the left. Thibaud, for example, cannot understand why I do not share his belief that Lenin, Stalin and Pol Pot demonstrate "the failure of socialism." Many left or ex-left intellectuals seem unaware that I never have regarded Leninist movements as having anything to do with "socialism" in any meaningful sense of the term; or that, having grown up in the libertarian anti-Leninist left, familiar since childhood with works that Thibaud has still never heard of, I am unimpressed with their recent conversions and unwilling to join in their new crusades, which often strike me as morally dubious and intellectually shallow. All of this has led to a great deal of bitterness on their part and not a little outright deceit.

As for the resurgence of anti-Semitism to which the PEN Club refers, or of racist atrocities, one may ask if the proper response to publication of material that may be used to



DRAWINGS BY FRANCES JETTER

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enhance racist violence and oppression is to deny civil rights. Or is it, rather, to seek the causes of these vicious developments and work to eliminate them? To a person who upholds the basic ideas professed in the Western democracies, or who is seriously concerned with the real evils that confront us, the answer seems clear.

There are, in fact, far more dangerous manifestations of "revisionism" than Faurisson's. Consider the effort to show that the United States engaged in no crimes in Vietnam, that it was guilty only of "intellectual error." This "revisionism," in contrast to that of Faurisson, is supported by the major institutions and has always been the position of most of the intelligentsia, and has very direct and ugly policy consequences. Should we then argue that people advocating this position be suspended from teaching and brought to trial? The issue is, of course, academic. If the version of the Zhdanov doctrine now being put forth in the Faurisson affair were adopted by people with real power, it would not be the "Vietnam revisionists" who would be punished.

I do not want to leave the impression that the whole of the French press has been a theater of the absurd or committed to such views as those reviewed. There has been accurate commentary in *Le Monde* and *Libération*, for example, and a few people have taken a clear and honorable stand. Thus Alfred Grosser, who is critical of what he believes to be my position, writes in *Le Quotidien de Paris*: "I consider it shocking that Mr. Faurisson should be prevented from teaching French literature at the University of Lyons on the pretext that his security cannot be guaranteed."

In the Italian left-liberal journal *Repubblica*, Barbara Spinelli writes that the real scandal in this affair is the fact that even a few people publicly affirm their support of the right to express ideas that are almost universally reviled—and that happen to be diametrically opposed to their own. My own conclusion is different. It seems to me something of a scandal that it is even necessary to debate these issues two centuries after Voltaire defended the right of free expression for views he detested. It is a poor service to the memory of the victims of the holocaust to adopt a central doctrine of their murderers. □

DONOVAN AND THE MOB

Something Rotten In New Jersey

SAMUEL DILLON

Richard Nixon's alliance with the Teamsters Union was but one example of the longstanding marriage of convenience between labor racketeers and right-wing businessmen and politicians. The businessmen buy labor peace with payoffs to racketeers while the corrupt union officials buy protection from government investigators with campaign donations and endorsements. Ray Donovan, President Reagan's choice for Secretary of Labor, was, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and others familiar with the labor scene, in all likelihood intimately acquainted with such alliances. Donovan is a millionaire contractor, whose heart lies with right-to-work laws; he was recommended for his new post by the union-busting brewing magnate Joseph Coors. Nevertheless, he learned the labor-relations trade in the corrupt New Jersey construction world, and knows how helpful union racketeers can be when a contractor is worried about restive workers.

The F.B.I.'s pre-confirmation investigation of Donovan's background turned up eighteen specific allegations of wrongdoing by him and his Schiavone Construction Company. The most damaging charges of all were those made by F.B.I. informant Ralph Picardo, who said Donovan had met with him personally about twenty times in 1967 and 1968 to give him payments from Schiavone. The funds were supposedly to cover deliveries to a construction site, but the deliveries were never made, according to Picardo. This was because the funds were actually payoffs to Teamster officials, buying labor peace. Because the F.B.I. was unable to produce the checks with which Donovan paid Picardo, Senator Orrin Hatch, chairman of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, said the Bureau was mistaken and pushed Donovan's confirmation through.

But the allegations against Donovan are not so easily brushed aside. The honesty and democracy of the American labor movement has come to depend on the Department of Labor's oversight. The Secretary of Labor is responsible for enforcing the Landrum-Griffin Act, passed in 1959 to protect clean unions from mob bosses. Landrum-Griffin's provisions on union reporting and disclosure, trusteeship, fair elections and fiduciary responsibility are the nation's first-line guarantees of honest, democratic unionism. When, for example, union elections are marred by violence and corruption, as in the 1969 fight in the United Mine Workers between Jock Yablonski and Tony Boyle, the members' only recourse is the Department of Labor.

In recent years, however, the Labor Department's anti-racketeering activity has been disturbingly lethargic. The General Accounting Office and the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations severely criticized Labor Secretary Ray Marshall several times during his tenure for his weak commitment to enforcing Landrum-Griffin. Georgia's Senator Sam Nunn blamed the department's lackluster enforcement record for the increasing reports of mob-related kickbacks, payoffs, sweetheart contracts, ghost employees and intimidation in the labor movement.

Labor observers have little reason to believe that the department will be any different under Donovan. "Donovan comes out of that whole swamp of New Jersey construction industry," said former *New York Times* labor analyst Abe Raskin. "It has been an absolute morass of collusion, payoffs and under-the-table deals. So to think that

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Donovan is going to come in and say, 'Let's get real enforcement of the Landrum-Griffin Act'. . . Well, I don't think so."

At the close of his confirmation hearings, Donovan made a great show of righteous indignation at labor corruption, and hinted that he would move vigorously against racketeers. "I look forward to the time, as Secretary of Labor, to doing all I can to stamp out the kind of activity wrongly attributed to me and my company," he said. There are signs, however, that what Donovan would really like to "stamp out" when he takes over at Labor is not the unions' involvement in corruption but their involvement in progressive politics.

Last year, on December 2, a right-wing advocacy group to which Donovan has given financial support filed a petition with the Labor Department demanding that it issue new rules on union political spending under the provisions of the Landrum-Griffin Act. The petition was drawn up by the Washington Legal Foundation, one of a network of conservative, pro-business "public-interest" groups (another is Interior Secretary James Watt's Mountain States Legal Foundation) which have sprung up recently, fertilized with corporate money. [See Bob Gottlieb and Peter Wiley, "The Watt Report," *The Nation*, January 17.] The Washington Legal Foundation replies guardedly to questions about its financial backing, but one staffer recently estimated that Donovan had contributed a total of $100,000.

The roster of the foundation's National Advisory Board reads like a *Who's Who* of the New Right. Among a host of others, it boasts Larry McDonald, the Georgia Congressman who is a card-carrying member of the John Birch Society, and Earl Butz, whose use of a racial slur in the presence of reporters cost him his job as Gerald Ford's Secretary of Agriculture. Also on the Advisory Board is anti-union Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah, who in 1977 spearheaded the drive to defeat the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s labor reform law and who shepherded Donovan's confirmation through his Labor and Human Resources Committee. With the financial support of Donovan and others, the foundation has since 1977 been attacking such enemies of the public interest as occupational safety, environmental protection, affirmative action and laws regulating energy production.

The foundation's petition demands that the Labor Department compel unions to make more extensive financial disclosures when filing the annual reports required by the Landrum-Griffin Act. Specifically, the petition calls for detailed disclosures of all union funds spent for purposes other than contract negotiation, administration and grievance handling—that is, all funds spent for community and political projects. This provision would fall most onerously on the cleanest and most public-spirited unions, which spend the most on community and political projects. "I don't know a union that's worth its salt that confines itself to negotiating and administering contracts," said one Labor Department official.

Laying the groundwork for more direct legal attacks on union political spending, the requested rule change would obligate unions to detail all nonbargaining expenditures in their reports to the Government. It also would "require disclosure of the decision-making processes whereby union officials decide how to disburse funds." Under this provision, unions would have to file detailed philosophical rationales for every political education project and every campaign endorsement.

Labor union members across the country need a Labor Secretary who will use the Landrum-Griffin Act and other laws to attack labor racketeers and to strengthen union democracy. Judging by Donovan's career at Schiavone, this is too much to expect from him—it is outside the realm of his work experience. Instead, if Donovan's past political connections are any indication, he will make labor's perennial nightmare come true—use the law to attack unionism itself. □

BEHIND THE JAPANESE MASKS

Diplomatic Nō Play

DONALD KIRK

Tokyo

For the Japanese, the initial signals out of Washington from the new Reagan Administration could hardly have been more confusing. First there was National Security Adviser Richard Allen saying there would be "no problem" in relations between the United States and Japan as long as the two nations "shared common goals" on such crucial matters as defense, trade and industry. Then there was Alexander Haig warning of the danger of mistakes that could compel Japan to "replace a pro-Western leadership with an essentially neutralist one." Finally, there was Bill Brock, no doubt reflecting his innate prejudices as heir to a Tennessee candy fortune, declaring simply, "We've got to get tough" when it comes to trade with Japan. And through it all there was the benign figure of Ambassador Mike Mansfield, who praised Japan as a good ally for supporting us in the Iranian hostage affair and the condemnation of the Soviet aggression in Afghanistan and looked forward to "continued excellent relations between our two countries."

Amid all this dissonance Japanese officials figured they could count on the clear voice of Allen to temper whatever hard-line steps Ronald Reagan might instinctively prefer to pressure Japan into knuckling under on the two most critical issues—Japan's low-profile defense budget and its perennially huge surplus in trade with the United States. Allen had long since sold out to Nissan, Japan's number-two auto manufacturer, whom he served as a high-salaried consultant—a facet of his career that *The Wall Street Journal* exposed near the end of Reagan's campaign. Allen won

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his credentials in Tokyo as "a friend of Japan"—meaning one who is in sympathy with the interests of Japanese government and business—in the course of some fifty trips here, most of them at the behest of businessmen in need of his advice and influence in order to promote exports to the United States. Under these circumstances, Japanese officials could be forgiven for believing that a wide range of personal and professional ties between Allen and his Japanese "friends," in the high levels of business and government, would insure his good will in what they foresaw as difficult negotiations ahead.

Allen himself signaled his partiality to Tokyo when he told Japanese reporters in Washington that Reagan and Japan's Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki "must sit down to evaluate what are the requirements for the remaining decade in the 1980s." Although to Americans the remark seems bland enough, this kind of talk appeals to Japanese bureaucrats, who scurry to map out a counter-program to "educate" the new Administration in Washington. Indeed, the foreign ministry made it clear it would do just that after the State Department created a mini *shokku* (shock) here on New Year's Eve with an unprecedented expression of "disappointment" over the Government's refusal to raise the defense budget by more than 7.6 percent, half the amount originally suggested by the White House and the Pentagon. The answer, said one diplomat, was to "do our utmost to gain U.S. understanding that Japan is doing its best to spend more for defense purposes in view of the Government's current financial difficulties." That line is not about to change before Reagan meets the blandly compromising Suzuki, who will simply explain that he trimmed the defense budget over the objections of his own defense chief because the finance ministry, which is the real center of power here, advised him to.

In any case, the Reagan-Suzuki summit is likely to be one of those hasty *pro forma* affairs in which both sides merely review positions already well known to each other, with little if any give-and-take. Reagan and Suzuki have already exchanged banalities by telephone—Reagan telling Suzuki that Japan is the "key" in American policy in the Pacific, Suzuki promising "fullest cooperation in common efforts to build a stable and prosperous world." The two will probably meet in Washington sometime before the North-South summit in Mexico City in June and the economic summit of leaders of major Western industrial nations in Ottawa in July. They will not be disposed to risk a serious confrontation on defense or trade because, more than the Americans, the Japanese view summit conferences as formal gestures, occasions for reaffirming "harmony" and whatnot, while leaving the hard bargaining to private tête-à-têtes between career officials, the men who really run Japan, and those who do not quite yet run the United States. It is for that reason that Japanese leaders place considerably less weight than do the Americans on assurances offered in the name of "good will" by their Prime Ministers sojourning in Washington—most recently the late Masayoshi Ohira. In his visit to the White House in May last year, six weeks before he died, Ohira told President Jimmy Carter that Japan would try to complete its five-year defense buildup within three years in response to the urgings of the U.S. Defense Department and the National Security Council.

But what could the Japanese make of Haig's remark that as Secretary of State he would eschew "public bludgeoning" of nations for refusing to spend what the United States asked them to on defense? Was Haig implying that in private he would be even tougher than outgoing Defense Secretary Harold Brown, whom he criticized for having described Japan's defense budget as "disappointing"? Regardless of whether the United States applies the pressure in public or private, the fact is the Japanese want no part of any American scheme that calls on them to abandon their longstanding policy of limiting defense spending to less than 1 percent of the nation's gross national product. The breadth of the differences between U.S. and Japanese leaders was—or should have been—amply clear well before Brown arrived here in December on a last-ditch arm-twisting expedition. Shortly before his arrival Suzuki warned that his Government could propose no more than a 9.7 percent increase. That figure was a "ceiling," he said, cautioning the American interlopers not to view it as a "floor." Indeed, U.S. defense experts had argued long before that even 9.7 percent—enough to boost the 1981 defense budget to $11.5 billion—would not suffice. Aroused Japanese officials had privately accused the United States of "interference," saying that the size of their military outlay was "for us, not another country, to decide."

Against this backdrop, Haig can still play upon the desires of a significant segment of right-wing Japanese policy makers and advisers for a revival of neo-militarism. Japan's own "national security study group," set up by Ohira, issued a lengthy report shortly after his death urging the Government to abandon the 1 percent limit. "We don't want to set any new ceiling," said Masataka Kosaka, a Kyoto University professor responsible for much of the study. "We want to be free from the past." It was apparently not coincidental that the report emerged amid a flurry of "suggestions," most of them of the "private" kind so ostentatiously espoused by Haig, that Japan pick up what U.S. officials persist in describing as "Japan's share of the defense burden." With their usual naïveté, U.S. defense analysts were sure that Japan was on the verge of a policy shift after the Japanese Defense Agency, in its annual report in August, described the Soviet arms buildup in the most alarmed tones ever used by any branch of the Government. Declaring that the Soviet Union was "strong enough to compete with the United States" in both nuclear and conventional war, the report spoke of an urgent need for Japan to modernize and expand its forces.

Initially, Japanese expect a honeymoon period as Haig seeks to capitalize on what he, like his predecessors, regards as the "very strong pro-West, pro-American" stance of the Suzuki Government. Such facile talk in itself betrays American ignorance of the Japanese position, which is neither "pro-West" nor "pro-American" but totally "pro-Japanese." In fact, there is no danger of a "neutralist" or

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"anti-West" or "anti-American" regime replacing the entrenched bureaucracy of the Liberal Democratic Party, for its leaders represent the most deeply conservative, nationalistic elements in Japanese life. They are the heirs of prewar and wartime Japanese leaders, under whom many current senior officials served as diligent junior bureaucrats. The durability of the L.D.P., founded in 1955 in a union of two sometimes conflicting conservative parties, should have been obvious when the party managed to overcome factional feuding after Ohira's death and settle on Suzuki as a compromise successor. The most powerful man in Japan remains Ohira's foremost ally, Kakuei Tanaka, a thoroughly corrupt politician who resigned as Prime Minister because of his implication in a real estate scandal in 1974. Tanaka still faces charges for his role in the Lockheed bribery case. The fact that he ritually "resigned" from the party itself after his indictment in the Lockheed affair in 1976 has done nothing to reduce his hold over the L.D.P.'s largest faction in both houses of the Diet.

Throughout Japan's postwar renaissance the feeling among Japanese leaders has been that they should do only the minimum necessary to placate the nation that conquered them. "The United States as the victor has the responsibility for military protection," said one dutiful bureaucrat in a conversation with me at his home on New Year's Day, expressing a common view here. "Why should the Americans force us to do more? They treat Japan like a colony." The rigorous patriotism of the Japanese colors all shades of the political spectrum. The leftist protest that flowered in the 1950s and 1960s faded rapidly in the 1970s following the restoration of Japanese sovereignty over Okinawa in 1972 and the collapse three years later of the American-backed regime in South Vietnam, for which U.S. bases here had served as rear-echelon supply depots. Internationally, there was virtually nothing left to oppose. Japan had regained a substantial measure of independence, and the suspicion lingers that even the anti-Vietnam War movement here acted more out of traditional chauvinism than radical opposition to the war itself.

Thus, repeated declarations of Japanese-American "friendship" sound strangely hollow to Japanese who already nurture an inbred anti-Americanism that tends to escape American officials in their rounds of formal luncheons and conferences, followed by cocktail parties, receptions and dinners with contacts whom they mistakenly regard as "friends." Beneath the level of extreme politeness with which the Japanese coat their personal and professional relations, they still harbor resentment at their country's humiliating defeat and a dislike of the foreigners who once occupied their land as conquerors. Anti-Americanism is especially strong among farmers, low-level managers and entrepreneurs—the types of Japanese who may go through their entire lives without holding a single conversation with a foreigner but who are the backbone of the L.D.P. "I can never like Americans since the war," said a bureaucrat who has spent his career with the Japan National Railways. "I saw too many of them. I know what they did to my country." Younger Japanese inherit the same set of attitudes, if not the memories. "We can never forget," said an office worker in his mid-20s. "We lost the war."

Polls have shown that while a majority of Japanese no longer subscribe wholeheartedly to Article Nine of the postwar Constitution, which technically forbids any kind of armed force, the legacy of military failure has left most Japanese opposed to rearmament beyond the present highly circumscribed effort. The most respected samurai warriors today are the careerists of the finance ministry, the economic planning agency, the ministry of international trade and industry and the large trading companies and banks—the men upon whose collective advice the Cabinet ultimately relies in drafting budgets and setting policies. To them the "get-tough" talk of Reagan's special trade representative, Bill Brock, the former Republican national chairman, stirred up their worst fears about the Reagan Administration. They could argue fairly convincingly, moreover, against Brock's contention that "Japan has been living in a very protective environment for a long time." After extremely tough bargaining, after all, Japan in the past couple of years has agreed to lift its

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quotas on imports of beef and oranges and to permit foreign companies to bid for contracts to sell equipment to the immense Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation.

These moves will not end the intense American pressure on Japan to import more U.S. goods through a distribution system that triples prices even without tariffs by the time they reach consumers. The bottom line, as Brock noted, was that Japan still had a $10 billion trade surplus with the United States in 1980—appreciably below the 1978 record of $11.6 billion but above the 1979 figure of $8.6 billion. If Brock's remarks are any indicator, the Reagan White House will not be inclined to resist demands for quotas on Japanese cars and trucks—one of the sharpest sticking points between Japan and the United States in view of the problems besetting the American automotive industry. With Japanese vehicles capturing a quarter of the U.S. market in 1980, with their exports up by nearly 20 percent over 1979, Japanese manufacturers sensed the need for "voluntary" cutbacks. They were firmly convinced, though, that the United States was extremely unfair in blaming Japan for what they universally see as America's own shortcomings in the form of poor quality control and low productivity. "Reagan says he believes in free trade," said an official with Keidanren, the Federation of Business and Industry, "but he wants freedom for the United States, not Japan."

In this atmosphere of uncertainty and mutual recrimination, the appointment of Mansfield to another tour as ambassador here was puzzling. In four years as Carter's emissary, Mansfield had earned the same dovish reputation on Japan that he once had had as Senate majority leader on Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Japanese no doubt liked him—so much so that American businessmen sometimes claimed he functioned more as "Japan's ambassador to the United States than our ambassador to Japan." If there was no question of Mansfield's personal popularity, the White House and Haig nonetheless exaggerated his usefulness on difficult issues. Others had negotiated the agreements on oranges and beef and Nippon Telephone, and Mansfield had done nothing to get Japan to cooperate on defense and limiting its automobile exports other than ritually express the American line and then back off after the Japanese demurred. Mansfield might claim a small measure of credit for inducing Japan, albeit reluctantly, to boycott the Moscow Olympics after the entry of Russian troops into Afghanistan and to join in economic sanctions against Iran during the hostage crisis, but the Japanese viewed these steps as short-term gestures necessary to appease the Americans in matters of immediate concern. The Japanese were careful never to jeopardize their longer-term interests—vast energy projects in Siberia and a petrochemical complex in Iran—despite token displays of support for Carter. (Japan had ceased to import oil from Iran, once the source of 12 percent of its requirements, in a pricing dispute a month before imposing sanctions on exports.)

In the end, Mansfield's gentility might even have been a liability since he gave the Japanese to believe the United States would content itself with words rather than action. "The Japanese always figure out the least they can do, and then they do it," said an experienced American negotiator. With Mansfield as the go-between, the fear in some quarters was that the Japanese would underestimate the potential vindictiveness of the Reagan White House and State Department. Then Allen, Haig, Brock—and Reagan—would discover at last the force of nationalism among a people that view the U.S.-Japan "alliance" at best as a sham, at worst as a necessary evil to endure until they have the confidence to rebuild their military machine on nobody's terms but their own. □

INSURANCE COMPANY WINDFALL

Sorry—Your Claim Denied

JAMES GANNON

A California couple and a New York man tell remarkably similar stories about different insurance companies. Each needed skilled nursing care for a dying member of the family. Each hired round-the-clock nursing service at a cost of about $1,400 a week. Each thought the insurance company would pay. And each was wrong.

Insurance policies, they discovered, have subtle "escape clauses" by which the insurer can promise an expensive benefit in one paragraph and take it back in another. In the California case, the couple's local Blue Cross agent had advised them to get a strong letter from their mother's doctor recommending a nurse. The doctor wrote that her heart was failing and that she could not survive at home without skilled nurses watching for life-threatening developments twenty-four hours a day.

The language of the insurance policy was very clear: for "skilled nursing care," Blue Cross would pay. But Blue Cross disregarded the doctor's letter, demanded to see the nurses' logs and ruled, based on the logs, that the patient was getting mere "custodial," or unskilled care. The woman died after the family ran out of money to pay for nurses; the doctor is now uncertain whether the lack of skilled nursing care contributed to her death.

Similarly, the New York man was caught in the distinction between a registered nurse and a licensed practical nurse. His insurer would pay for the former, not the latter; but he did not learn this until after he had hired practical nurses through an agency. With his wife of forty-two years fading fast, he had little time for distinguishing between kinds of nurses.

Cases of insurance companies reneging on claims are far from rare. According to William Shernoff, a Claremont, California, lawyer who makes his living representing aggrieved insurance consumers, they number in the tens of thousands a year. Actually, the scope of the problem is im-

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possible to quantify. State regulators do not usually keep good records. They do receive a very large number of complaints—60,000 were reported in New York State alone in 1979, but only about 4,000 in the more populous state of California. Not all the complaints are upheld by the regulators, although a good percentage are. On the other hand, not everyone with a grievance complains. Howard Clark, former chief insurance commissioner of South Carolina, says that "only about one person in ten" who feels cheated on claims ever files a complaint.

Shernoff's specialty is health and disability insurance involving direct "first party" claims. He handles so-called "bad-faith" cases which are brought in civil court. "Bad faith" is an umbrella term which implies that the insurer has shown "malice, fraud and/or oppression" against the insured. A jury that finds a defendant guilty of bad faith can exact "punitive damages" in addition to compensatory damages.

In the hands of California juries, the punitive damages law has been strong medicine against corporate bullies. It has been applied in twenty to twenty-five other states, but penalties have not been as severe as in California. One of Shernoff's cases made legal history—a $5 million judgment to a roofer from Pomona, California, named Michael Egan against Mutual of Omaha—as the largest award of its kind. (On appeal, the California Supreme Court ordered a retrial on the amount, calling the $5 million "excessive.") Late last year, another Shernoff client, 72-year-old Elmer Norman of Azusa, California, won $4.5 million from the Colonial Penn Franklin Company, which has dominated health insurance for the elderly.

Shernoff is probably the nation's top lawyer in this field. He fancies himself a free-enterprise regulator of the insurance industry, filling a void left by inadequate state government regulation. His services are so much in demand that he can afford to pick only the most egregious cases—in other words, the most likely winners. He works on a 33 percent contingency fee (40 percent if the case goes to appeal), and his firm accepts about 200 cases a year, most of which are settled out of court. Shernoff claims a 90 percent success rate in court and, perhaps equally important, some of his wins have been of a spectacular nature.

Prudential, the nation's largest insurance company, was the opponent in the case of ex-trucker Ray Pistorius of Dunsmuir, California. Pistorius hurt his back several years ago in a truck accident and put in for $300 a month disability. Prudential paid, except for one monthlong interruption, until 1978 when the company's claims division inexplicably decided Pistorius was not disabled.

Pistorius, who still suffers frequent back spasms and whose doctor had certified him disabled, appealed to the California Insurance Commission, which ordered an independent medical examination. The second doctor confirmed the disability, but ventured the opinion that Pistorius might be well enough to drive, say, a school bus part time if it did not involve heavy mechanical or maintenance work. At Prudential a low-level claims employee wrote a memo to her superiors saying they had no choice but to continue Pistorius's payments, but she was overruled. Prudential failed to tell the state the results of the second medical examination, and so the state, although it had requested a follow-up report from Prudential, took no further action. Pistorius sued and won. A jury awarded him $45,000 in compensatory damages to make him whole for his losses and personal suffering, and $1 million in punitive damages to penalize Prudential for its bad-faith conduct. Prudential is appealing the verdict.

In assessing punitive damages a jury must take into account both the degree of wrongful conduct and the financial circumstances of the wrongdoer. So they took a revealing look at the nation's largest insurance company: $54 billion total assets; $2 billion in real estate alone (the Empire State Building and 50 percent of the New York Hilton are among "Pru's" prime holdings); $278 million net income last year. Then they punished the company roughly a day's income. It was like giving a giant a slap on the wrist.

But why would a company as big and rich as Prudential want to disallow a mere $300-a-month disability claim? Insurance companies depend on trust, confidence, stability to attract business—especially trust. Without it they decline. Why take the risk for anything so trivial?

Several conflicting reasons are advanced to explain why an insurer would deny, delay or cancel any claim. The companies blame overzealous junior employees and excessive wariness attributable to the high incidence of fraudulent claims, which make the insurers reluctant to give claimants the benefit of the doubt. But there is another reason not cited by the industry. Even though making good on claims is part of the routine cost of doing insurance business (in 1979 the industry paid out about $88 billion to claimants), there is a strong financial incentive not to pay, which derives from tax shelters peculiar to the insurance business.

How sweet it is for the insurance companies was demonstrated by Robert Hunter, former administrator of the Federal Insurance Administration, in a report on insurance rate-making.* Hunter, who joined forces with Ralph Nader to form an insurance consumer lobby (the National Insurance Consumer Organization), called attention to industry "reserves" set aside for refunds on canceled policies and for claims payments. Because the reserves are mandated by the states to protect consumers, they enjoy a special tax-free status. But this is merely an accounting convenience. The money is actually at work, coming in, going out, earning interest on investments. State regulators require, said Hunter, "that these reserves be carefully invested and maintained."

Thus, manipulating claims is one way to stretch revenues. As sickness or accidents occur, insurers are required to estimate how much should be set aside for claims. If a claim is not paid, or is delayed, the tax-sheltered money is accumulating interest from secure investments that are them-

*"Taking the Bite Out of Insurance," National Insurance Consumer Organization, 1980. Hunter concludes that states could save consumers $4 billion annually by requiring the industry to include investment income in rate-making.

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selves apt to be exempt from taxation. Hunter said in an interview that he knew of companies, which he declined to name, that would take "defensive" postures as a matter of policy, inviting lawsuits rather than paying off claims to unlucky policyholders. Even if required eventually to settle up, the insurance company would profit from the use of policyholders' money to which it was not legitimately entitled.

If you multiply a trivial claims payment—like $300 a month, or even $1,400 a week—by hundreds of thousands of claims denials, delays or cutoffs, the total comes to hundreds of millions of dollars a year—not at all trivial. Then add interest leveraged by special tax advantages. Then consider an even more important "leverage"—the fact that the true meaning of insurance industry profits is not the return on premiums but the return on equity. (Equity is a company's working capital, such as stock investment; in the insurance industry where many companies are mutuals, theoretically owned by policyholders, the "surplus" of assets over liabilities is an important form of equity.) Premium income, according to Hunter, is one-and-a-half to three times greater than equity. Thus, a 10 percent return on premiums carefully invested in today's money market would amount to a 15-to-30 percent return on equity. The numbers grow vague at this point, but the meaning is clear enough: large, ill-gotten profits.

Hunter, who worked in the private sector before going into government, said insurance companies used to openly set quotas for dishonoring claims. "The quotas would come down in writing," he explained, "but the practice was stopped years ago." However, if the testimony of one insider is correct, the practice merely went undercover. Larry Plumb, former senior claims adjuster for the Pennsylvania Life Insurance Company of Santa Monica, California, told a court in Mississippi that his company had a quota system. Claims adjusters, he said, were pressured to terminate a percentage of their claims every month, regardless of the merits, so the company could save money. His testimony helped Wilfred Fayard, a Mississippi sheet metalworker, win $225,000 from Penn Life—$175,000 of it in punitive damages. (Plumb was subsequently fired, and has brought another suit against Penn Life charging that the company had him blackballed from the industry.) Asked if such quota systems are industrywide, Plumb said, "I've not heard of many companies that do not have some form of quota system."

Perhaps a thorough investigation of industry claims practices is in order. Shernoff said he knows only of piecemeal inquiries contained in audits of individual companies or in investigations that focused on other aspects of the industry. Ironically, the industry uses policyholders' money to lobby for the status quo, which includes what Shernoff calls "sophisticated embezzlement" of policyholders' money by blocking claims. The status quo also means no Federal regulation and, generally, industry dominance at the state level. Most state regulators have only limited authority over the industry. In the Pistorius case, for example, the state could demand that Prudential give him a second medical examination, but it could not have ordered resumption of payments. This is typical. The General Accounting Office reported in 1979 that of forty-six state insurance agencies surveyed, only six had complete authority to order companies to pay claims.

If it can be said that state regulation is spotty, redress in the courts is equally so. While it is always possible to seek compensatory damages, at least half the states do not now provide for punitive damages. Shernoff, for example, would not touch the predicament of the New York man cited at the beginning of the article—even if he thought the case had merit. "Lawyers call me all the time for advice on punitive damages," he said. "But if I find out they're from New York, I tell them to forget it. I've researched the law there. The industry has that state locked up."

Despite the limitations, punitive damages laws are a powerful sanction against an industry that faces precious few of them, although there are readily available sanctions against individuals who cheat the companies. In the Colonial Penn case, Shernoff succeeded where government failed. Colonial Penn had cheated 2.5 million elderly members of the American Association of Retired Persons by substituting a new out-of-hospital plan for an existing one, promising improved benefits while actually reducing coverage by 40 percent; then thumbed its nose at investigations by the U.S. Postal Service, the Federal Trade Commission and the insurance agencies of New York, Wisconsin and Illinois before finally being nailed by Shernoff.

The lawyers' share of the $4.5 million award (likely to be reduced on appeal years hence) would be $1.8 million—a big payoff in a high-risk business, but none of it at public expense, and probably cheaper than the wasted efforts of five bureaucracies. Meantime, the A.A.R.P. has elected to take its insurance business to another company—Prudential. □

T.M.I.

(Continued From Front Cover)

Bureau and learned that early in the morning the winds had been blowing generally south and southeast, toward the rural counties of York and Lancaster, at a relatively low velocity. This was of course rather good news for the large population of Harrisburg, but not such good news for the people in York and Lancaster counties. The low wind speed would mean relatively high concentrations of gases in the air, which in turn might lead to potentially large inhalation doses—as large as those I had just calculated for the soldiers in Nevada. And the fine drizzle in the air would bring down

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radioactive iodines into the local pastures, thus presenting still another problem for the people of this heavily agricultural area even if a major meltdown of the reactor core should be averted.

(Dr. Sternglass goes on to describe his first-hand investigation of the aftereffects at T.M.I. Confused reports at the site on the amount of emissions leave him in a state of uncertainty, but his own readings clearly show cause for concern.)

On Monday, April 16, 1979, *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* carried across the top of its front page a special report from the Associated Press with excerpts of tape recordings of the proceedings of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission during the crisis at Three Mile Island. Strangely enough, as in the case of the Watergate affair, it would be the private conversations of top Government officials recorded on magnetic tape and unexpectedly released to the news media that would provide the crucial information.

The excerpts opened with the following comment by Lee Gossick, executive director for operations of the N.R.C. on Friday, March 30 (this was one day after I had urged the evacuation of pregnant women and young children at a news conference in Harrisburg):

> Bill, we have got a deteriorating situation up there with regard to some releases. The Governor is asking us to confirm what he is getting from the plant, which says that they had an uncontrolled release of stuff.

To this, Harold Denton, director of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation in charge of all N.R.C. activities at Three Mile Island, answered:

> They are getting 63 curies per second, and I can't explain to you the mathematics, but what they are saying is if that's true, by comparing it with what we know the shutdown rate was and the measurements taken at the north gate, and those were yesterday, they were on the order of three times what they were yesterday, which would put us in the 1,200 millirems per hour.

These were truly enormous release rates of fresh fission gases, since in a single hour (consisting of 3,600 seconds) there would be 3,600 times 63 or some 226,800 curies being released in an uncontrolled manner without detailed analysis or significant holdup to allow the most dangerous short-lived isotopes to decay. Even Millstone, in New London, Connecticut, the worst of all reactors, had not released more than fifteen times that much in a whole year.

The corresponding radiation dose of 1,200 millirems per hour, equivalent to the dose of some 50 to 100 chest X-rays, was presumably measured in the narrow plume close to the release point at the plant, since it was 10,000 times the dose-rate that I had recorded the previous day in an airplane and on the ground a few miles away in the pockets of trapped gas. The road into Harrisburg was evidently well away from the narrow, invisible plume of radioactive gases meandering upstream, to the northwest, toward Middletown and Harrisburg with the slowly moving prevailing winds. Wherever it touched down, it would lead to an enormous inhalation dose in a very short time.

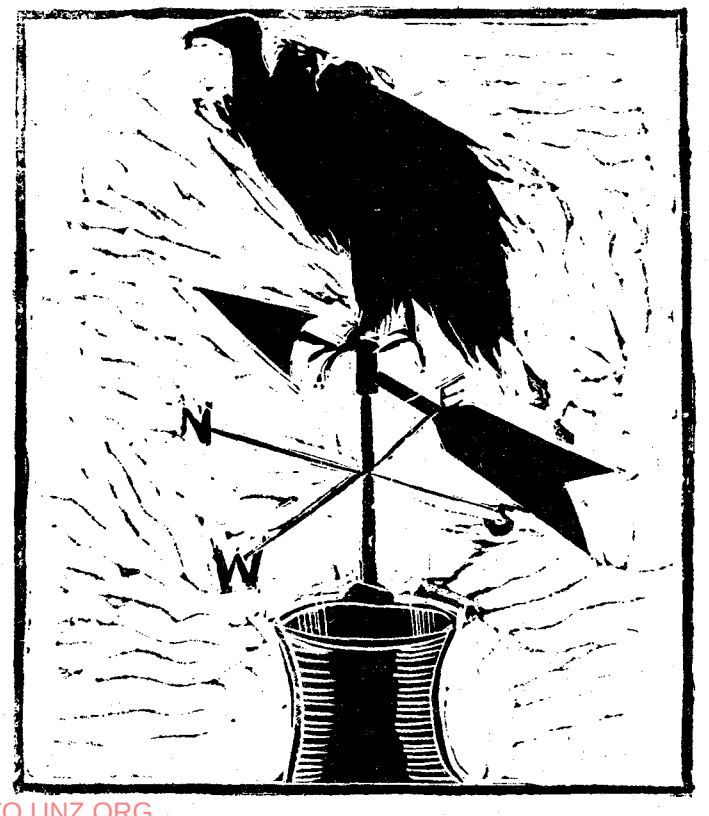
The taped conversation concluded with the following statement by the chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Joseph Hendrie:

> It seems to me that I have got to call the Governor . . . to do it immediately. We are operating almost totally in the blind, his information is ambiguous, mine is nonexistent, and—I don't know, it's like a couple of blind men staggering around making decisions.

Chairman Hendrie's remark was to be quoted repeatedly by the news media later, but strangely enough it was always referred to in the context of the danger of a major meltdown. Either by reason of ignorance or design, the public was not told that the remark was made in the context of the danger from the ongoing large gas releases that were rapidly approaching the critical Environmental Protection Agency emergency dose of 25,000 millirems to the whole body, or key organs such as the thyroid, from internal and external sources combined. This high level had been set by the Federal Radiation Council back in 1965 and later adopted by the E.P.A. as the maximum allowable dose before countermeasures or an evacuation of the population should be ordered. Certainly neither the people living nearby nor the reporters at the site had ever been told of the large radiation doses from inhaled gases that they were receiving.

The excerpts from the tapes continued to record the enormous concern about the growing radiation doses from the inhalation of the gases to the people in the area. Hendrie, for example, said:

> During one of these burst releases up over the plant several hours ago, up over the plant about 1,200 millirems per hour, which seems to calculate out, by the time the plume comes to the ground where people would get it, would be about 120 millirems per hour. Now, that is still below the E.P.A. evacuation trigger levels; on the other hand, it certainly is a pretty husky dose-rate to be having off site.



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Here it was: the N.R.C. knew that the true doses were not just a few millirems to the people in the area, as it would later claim at the hearings held by Senator Edward Kennedy, with maximum values on the order of 75 to 100 millirems nearest to the plant.

The N.R.C. knew just as I did that the greatest dose arose not from the external gamma radiation measured by a survey meter or a film badge but from the internal beta radiation from the inhaled fission gases and particles in the lung, the thyroid and the other critical organs that concentrate the different substances according to their various chemical properties. So when the external gamma dose-rate on the ground was of the order of 1 to 2 millirems per hour, the true dose-rate to the lung and other critical organs could be as much as 50 to 100 times greater, or of the same general magnitude as the 120 millirems per hour Hendrie himself had just mentioned.

But the N.R.C. also knew, as I did, that if it ever were to order the full evacuation that should have been ordered long before, it would not only have caused a panic among the completely confused and unprepared population, it would also have been the end of the nuclear industry, whether or not the core would ever go to a complete meltdown.

And so more precious time in which to save lives was lost by recommending only that people should stay indoors. Not until later in the day did Gov. Richard Thornburgh finally agree to the compromise plan of ordering evacuation of pregnant women and young children. But as I was to learn in an unexpected manner a few months later, most of the damage had already been done before the evacuation was ordered.

During the latter part of the summer I received a phone call from someone who asked me for a collection of all my articles on the effects of low-level radiation. He said that he was working on a study of the total economic and health impact of the Three Mile Island accident for the Presidential commission chaired by Dr. George Kemeny of Dartmouth College, and he wanted to include an upper-limit estimate based on my statistical findings around various nuclear plants and after various fallout episodes.

I was surprised by this request since I had not been asked to testify before the Kemeny Commission, which had been holding extensive hearings all summer long. Also, I wondered how the caller could use my earlier studies if there were no detailed estimates of releases and dose measurements available. (The N.R.C. had claimed that all the meters in the stack had gone off scale so that no one knew or would ever know just how much had actually been released.)

And so I asked whether he had any detailed information on the quantities of gases released or the amounts of radioactivity in the air, the milk and the diet on which to base a meaningful estimate of the likely health effects and their costs. To my surprise, he said that he had such a document prepared for the Metropolitan Edison Company by their own environmental consultants, Pickard, Lowe and Garrick, and that he would be glad to send me a copy for my examination since it was being widely circulated within the N.R.C. and the Kemeny Commission.

A few days later, the two-inch-thick document entitled "Assessment of Offsite Radiation Doses From the Three Mile Island Unit 2 Accident TDR-TMI-116," dated July 31, 1979, arrived in the mail. And there, in the second paragraph, was the proof that the evacuation ordered on the third day had indeed been too late:

> Based on techniques used in this analysis, dose estimates are consistent with the release of 7 million curies of noble gases in the first one-and-one-half days of the accident, 2 million in the next two days and 1 million in the next three days, and a relatively small amount thereafter.

By Friday afternoon, the third day of the accident, when the evacuation took place, between 7 million and 9 million curies out of an estimated 10 million curies of radioactive fission gases had already been released, together with a corresponding fraction of the 14 curies of radioactive iodine 131. And since the report also concluded that most of the thyroid dose was due to inhalation—and not ingestion of drinking water or milk—in the first five days of the accident, it was clear that by the time the evacuation of the pregnant women had been ordered, most of the thyroid doses to the developing fetuses had already taken place.

These were indeed very large amounts of radioactivity, comparable to those that arrived from the Chinese bomb tests in October 1976 on the East Coast and for which I had found a 20 to 60 percent increase in infant mortality in the following three months all the way from Delaware to Maine. Just two years earlier, I had prepared a paper on this incident for the Committee on the Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiation of the National Academy of Sciences for its meeting in Washington on July 17, 1977, in which the levels of radioactive iodine 131 in the milk reported by the E.P.A. were summarized.

Looking at the Metropolitan Edison Company's own measurements in some of the nearby towns, I saw it was evident that the levels of iodine 131 produced by the Three Mile Island accident were comparable to those produced by the heavy rainout of the drifting Chinese fallout as it met a severe rainstorm moving up the East Coast from Delaware to Maine. For the Hardison Farm, to the north of Three Mile Island, the report listed 110 picocuries per liter on April 25, almost a month after the accident. By that time, the activity would have decayed away to only about one-eighth to one-sixteenth of its maximum value, so that the peak values in local farms, if there had been adequate monitoring at the time, would have been in the range of 800 to 1,600 picocuries per liter. The amount one worried about was measured in picocuries, which was only a millionth of a millionth, or a trillionth, of 1 curie. Yet 14 curies or 14 trillion of these units had been discharged into the air, breathed by the pregnant women in the area and added to what they ingested with the milk. The report showed concentrations in the air as high as 20 picocuries per cubic meter. Since 1 cubic meter was roughly the volume of air inhaled by an adult every hour, 20 picocuries of iodine 131 entered a pregnant

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oman's lungs each hour at these concentrations.

The milk concentrations compared with the highest values sted in the E.P.A.'s December 1976 tabulation published wo months after the Chinese fallout had arrived. These had anged from 36 picocuries per liter in Rhode Island to 123 in Connecticut. At that time, infant mortality rose 60 percent n the first quarter of 1977 compared to the same period in 976 in Delaware, 41 percent in New Hampshire, 17 percent n Maine and 13 percent in Connecticut. But what was even nore significant was that in Massachusetts, where the health lepartment had ordered the cows to be fed stored hay which vas relatively free from fresh fallout, infant mortality continued its rapid decline. Furthermore, infant mortality kept lecreasing in the United States as a whole by 7 percent, as it lid in Rhode Island, which receives most of its milk from Massachusetts.

Thus, if the measurements reported by Pickard, Lowe ınd Garrick were accurate, there simply would have to be a harp rise in infant mortality in the Harrisburg area and hose parts of Pennsylvania and other nearby states over vhich the radioactive gases released in the first three days ıad drifted. On the other hand, infant mortality should ıgain continue its normal decline in areas that happened to ɔe spared by the invisible clouds of radioactive gases from he Three Mile Island nuclear plant.

But in which direction was the wind blowing during the ɔeriod of highest release rates? Was there any way to find ɔut how much was coming out at any given moment? After ıll, according to a story sent out by *The Washington Post* news service and published on April 22, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission had been told by one of its staff people, Albert Gibson, that the radiation monitors in the stack went off scale on the morning of the accident. Thus, in answer to Commissioner Victor Gilinsky's question, "So we don't really know what went up?" Gibson replied, "That's correct."

The story went on to say that as much as 365 millirems per hour of beta and gamma radiation were recorded on the ground some 1,000 feet from the stack, and a helicopter had recorded three times this level in the air over the vent, confirming once again that the dose-rates were far higher than the public had been told at the Senate hearings if the beta radiation that accounts for most of the internal dose from inhaled gases is considered. But Gibson went on to say that "those measurements were very inconclusive," and that "without knowing the precise weather patterns, we don't know if they were made at the appropriate locations."

However, leafing through the report of Met Ed's environmental consultants, I found that these were all completely misleading statements. Contrary to what the N.R.C. commissioners and the public were being told, there were radiation monitoring instruments in the plant that never went off scale, namely in the auxiliary building, whose readings were directly related to the amount of radioactive gas being released. Here was the way the utility's consultants described how it was possible to know how much gas was being released every moment:

> Strip chart records from all noble gas radiation monitors in the plant ventilation exhaust show no significant radiation levels during the first three hours of the accident. Since these monitors are in the most probable pathway for release, it is concluded that no significant releases occurred before 0700 March 28. Shortly after 0700, however, these monitors, which are designed to read normal low levels, indicated rapidly increasing radiation concentrations. Within a few minutes, they went off scale on the high side. At about the same time, the in-plant building area monitors which measure radiation levels inside the fuel handling and auxiliary buildings began to record increasing levels from about 1 milliroentgen to 100 milliroentgen per hour at 0740. At about 0900 the readings began to increase again to reach about 100 milliroentgen per hour at 1000 hours. They continued to fluctuate at high levels for about four days. One or more of these area monitors continued to read on scale during the course of the accident.

The report went on to explain in detail that by means of these measuring instruments it was possible to know what went out the stack because:

> . . . radiation levels measured by area monitors in the auxiliary and fuel handling buildings are proportional to the rate at which airborne gamma activity was released to the environment . . .

In table after table and chart after chart, the releases and gamma radiation doses in different directions were worked out in detail. For every hour of the accident from 4 A.M. on March 28 until midnight of the fourth day, the readings of the area monitors were given together with the hourly wind direction and wind speeds. It showed that during the period of highest releases, from 10 A.M. on Wednesday the 28th to 7 A.M. on Thursday the 29th, the winds were blowing north, northwest and west at six to nine miles per hour, sending the radioactive gas toward upstate New York and western Pennsylvania. Only later, when the rate of release had decreased tenfold, did the winds shift briefly to the south, becoming more variable thereafter.

By the time the winds were blowing toward the northeast on Saturday, the fourth day of the accident, the intensity had dropped to less than one-twentieth of its peak value, thus largely sparing the most densely populated areas of Philadelphia, New Jersey and New York City.

No wonder the N.R.C. staff did not want to let the public know that they knew exactly in which direction the most radioactive clouds had moved, since this information could then be used to tie any later localized rises in fetal deaths, infant mortality and cancer to the radioactive gas clouds from Three Mile Island. In fact, I remembered only too well the attempts of some of the same individuals formerly working for the Atomic Energy Commission to discredit my findings on the rises of infant mortality across the southeastern United States following the first nuclear-bomb test at Alamogordo, New Mexico, by claiming that the winds were not blowing in that direction. And they certainly did not want any of this to become known before the Kemeny Commission was scheduled to complete its report in early November.

Once again, as in the case of the Nevada tests, it was

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essential to keep such knowledge from the public and the scientific community at large. The N.R.C., E.P.A. and all the other Federal and state agencies knew full well that the doses were comparable with those experienced by the people of Utah, Montana, Wyoming and the other states across the northern United States as far as New York and New England during the period of the Nevada tests, or for releases from some of the largest and most heavily emitting reactors, such as Millstone, over a period of a year or two.

If, indeed, there should once again be sudden rises in infant mortality in areas where the radioactive clouds had drifted and the public should learn of them when the televised nightmare of Three Mile Island was still fresh on everyone's mind, this public knowledge would threaten the Government's and the nuclear industry's vast program to build a thousand of these giant reactors by the end of the century near all the major cities, and would result in costly damage suits, exactly as in the case of the Nevada tests.

I had tried to obtain the preliminary data on monthly infant mortality rates by county from the health department in Harrisburg without success. I was told that this data had not yet been sorted out and processed, and that it would be many months before it could be properly assembled, even though such data had already been sent to me by the Maryland Health Department. All research on the health effects of Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania was under the direction of Dr. George Tokuhata, the same man who prepared the statistical portion of the Shapp Report exonerating the Shippingport nuclear plant near Pittsburgh back in 1973. There was clearly no hope for any help from that direction.

All I could do was to wait for the state-by-state data on monthly infant deaths and births published by the Center for Health Statistics in Washington, which was usually three or four months behind. Thus, if significant effects would first show up for infants two to three months after the accident, or for the months of May and June, the earliest numbers indicating an effect would not become publicly available until August or September, too late for any presentation to the Kemeny Commission. □

(Continued Next Week)

LETTERS.

(Continued From Page 226)

I believe this to be the crux of the matter, and hope that Europe will see it as well. Even the Polish workers might realize this and be for the moratorium. It would be like pulling war out by the roots.

A movement should be started here of prominent people, including clergymen of the left, Helen Caldecott, Michael Klare, Barry Commoner and many others, to visit officials of European countries to encourage such a Congress and the resulting independent and nuclear-free Europe.

The effect of such action would be stunning to the American war makers. It is probably the only way to get through to the military minds of the United States that the people do not want war.

Some may criticize this notion as just another Ford Peace Ship. But the situation is different. Then we were just out of colonialism, the European heads having their own way. Now we are the empire, and Europe the colony. The great "Protest to Survive" must be developed both here and in Europe, to frustrate an American-instigated holocaust. *George A. Beyer*

A MIDDLE-CLASS MOVEMENT?

San Jose, Calif.

There is an omission in Paul Wachtel's "The Politics of Narcissism" [*The Nation*, Jan. 3-10] that significantly diminishes the value of an otherwise admirable effort. He makes the movement of the 1960s a middle-class one and thinks that a "basic" source for it was "a recognition on the part of many young people that their parents' affluence did not bring the satisfaction and contentment they were led to expect."

Quite apart from the fact that many of the young people who were leaders of the movement—like Mario Savio and Bettina Aptheker—certainly did not have parents of affluence, Wachtel's essay ignores the central consequence for the 1960s of the black liberation movement. In the 1960s, as generally in the history of the United States, the struggle of black masses, with allies, was an indispensable source for and component of progressive and democratic efforts. *Herbert Aptheker*

WACHTEL REPLIES

New York City

I certainly have no quarrel with Herbert Aptheker's point about the importance of the black liberation movement. But I believe he errs—as I myself did in my essay—in referring to "the" movement of the 1960s as if it were one thing. The various progressive movements of the 1960s shared certain common ideals and aspirations but also evidenced some degree of autonomy and occasionally even conflict. The particular movement I stressed in my essay *was* primarily a middle-class one, and the one that gave rise to the trends now being labeled as narcissistic. Aptheker usefully reminds us of the broader context of which that movement was a part.

Paul L. Wachtel

VILLAINY AND OPPORTUNITY

Washington, D.C.

If Robert Lekachman's selection of seven recent "thrillers" for review ["The Thriller Connection," *The Nation*, Dec. 20, 1980] is a representative sample of the genre, then the Arabs will be happy to know that they are providing around 57 percent of the villains—well above their proportion of world population. Whether it's Qaddafi, the Saudis, Palestinian terrorists or a "ruthless Arab spy," the Arabs seem to offer our thriller writers an inexhaustible stockpile of villainy. Are the Arabs really that much more villainous than other national groups, or have we here yet another depressing scrap of evidence that the American media stereotype the Arabs more viciously and insensitively than they treat any other group?

Michael C. Hudson, Director
Center for Contemporary Arab Studies
Georgetown University

LEKACHMAN REPLIES

New York City

Villainy and opportunity are highly correlated. Since 1973 the Arabs have had the best opportunities and therefore committed the most villainies.

Robert Lekachman

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

A Father Father Figure

VILLIAM O'ROURKE

'HE COMPANY OF WOMEN. *By Mary Gordon. Random House. 291 pp. 12.95.*

The late Jean Stafford told a friend the following story about her first husband, Robert Lowell. Lowell had converted o Catholicism at the time he married Stafford and his romance with the Church was of sufficient fervor that t led him to excessive attentions to itual: attendance at novenas, benedicions, early morning daily mass, etc. After a while, all these displays of devoion and dawn departures became a bit nuch for the feisty young bride and she began to pack her bags, fed up with the new convert's enthusiasms. She was filling a valise, Stafford recounted, and Lowell rushed into the bedroom and exclaimed, "Don't go, Jean, don't leave. I'll stop it now. I've got the vocabulary."

Well, Mary Gordon certainly has the vocabulary, too—the language, signs and symbols of the Roman Catholic Church (though Gordon's father was Jewish, he—like Lowell—was an enthusiastic convert). Every writer needs a subject and Gordon has laid claim to Catholic terrain. Her second novel, *The Company of Women*, repeats the narrative formula of her successful first novel, *Final Payments*. Both employ the Rip Van Winkle, Time Machine, Wild Child of Borneo principle: a character emerges from a grossly sheltered existence into a "new" world, appearing to be a primitive faced with outlandish customs, similar to the Japanese soldier found in the jungle decades after World War II who is then whisked off to modern Tokyo.

As one of the characters says late in *The Company of Women*, "Clare thought once more of the extreme parochialism of her friends," and so, once again, does the reader. *Final Payments* gave us a young woman who cared selflessly for her dying, devout, demonic father, and thereby missed the second half of the twentieth century. After her father went to his reward she went out into the world, found it wanting, retreated into the care of a crazy old woman and, in the last pages, was, with the help of friends, about to give the world one more try. She seemed to be suffering from some chronic form of spiritual agoraphobia.

In *The Company of Women*, another young woman, Felicitas, grows up surrounded by women bereft of men ("All her life she had lived among virgins and widows. She knew nothing about life"). But these women do have a man at the center of their lives: a tall, handsome priest, Father Cyprian. Cyprian, for those who lack the vocabulary, was the first Christian bishop to suffer martyrdom—he, too, was a convert to Christianity. But Father Cyprian's effect on the women seems to have more to do with that other Cyprian, Aphrodite, the goddess of erotic love and marriage, since he is the surrogate romantic interest for the women of the novel's title. Father Cyprian rules their imaginations and something of their lives. He is their standard, the embodiment of what Gordon wants to demonstrate with this novel: how difficult it is for women to have an inner life that is not controlled by men; how hard it is for women not to listen to men who think they know more about women than women know about themselves. Her novel certainly demonstrates this dreary difficulty—if, indeed, it is central to women's experience.

Father Cyprian is seductive and tyrannical. A Father father figure. One of the company of women is briefly married to a madman and Father "Cyp" has him permanently committed, but when the woman, Mary Rose, later asks if she might marry someone else she has fallen in love with, Cyprian informs her that "her marriage to Burt had been a lawful one; Burt had not been insane at the time of their marriage"—something the reader knows is false—and "whatever God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." Mary Rose gets angry; Cyprian says nothing, whereupon Mary Rose falls to her knees and asks his forgiveness. Women spend a lot of time at Cyprian's feet in this novel. Felicitas, early on, thinks: "She wanted always to be there kneeling, looking at his black shoes below the black cuffs of his trousers and the long white alb."

It is hard, I suppose, to escape a working-class Catholic upbringing without nurturing the desire to be crucified sooner or later, but Gordon's women seem to have appetites whetted only for mortification. Of the women, only Felicitas has a fleeting experience of sexual pleasure, and she later thinks of it as "an odd disease, her adoption of sexual interest, but it was over now." For all the interest Felicitas showed in such matters, it was less a disease than a common cold.

Mary Gordon's characters are such a strange tribe that readers may be attracted to them for the same reasons the typical nineteenth-century reader neglected the best of Melville but sought out his early seafaring books: the lure of exotics, the freakish. In Gordon's case, she didn't have to travel to discover her curious primitives. If there were some Catholic version of an anti-defamation league, it might find something to object to here. The most becrazed antipapist would delight in either of her novels, though I don't believe that was what Gordon had in mind. It does take quite a leap of faith to swallow her characters whole.

The Company of Women is partitioned (it often seems some rough carpentry was employed to put this book together) into three sections, each section locked in a specific time: 1963, 1969, 1977. In the '69 section, Felicitas, now a student at Columbia, takes a political science class and discovers that her professor is "the handsomest man she had ever seen." With soap opera predictability, an affair ensues. He is a bastard who mistreats her in a cartoon version of late-1960s born-again piggishness, asserting: "I didn't know what women wanted because I was completely out of touch with the feminine side of myself. Now I wish I had been born a woman. A black woman." He lives in a commune of four: three women and himself. (The parallelism with Cyprian is so crude you want to ignore it.) The professor is the kind of teacher who seems to know no more than his students, which might be the author's fault.

Though Catholic vapors are redolent

William O'Rourke teaches English at Mount Holyoke College. His second novel, Idle Hands, *was just published by Delacorte.*

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throughout the novel, Gordon's Catholic women resemble not so much Mary McCarthy's intellectual co-religionists as James T. Farrell's 1930s men and women, who were dominated by the Church—figures to be condescended to, helplessly entrapped by harsh, unrelenting dogma and grammar school theology. Gordon writes a leaner prose than Farrell (there are two or three bright patches in the book) though she doesn't often risk a figure of speech, which is good, since when she does we get something as ill-advised as: "Felicitas said goodbye to Gidget with the vengeful edge of a lord who has sold his patrimony to a manufacturer of artificial limbs." Or something strained: "Like a homesteader pacing his land, she rolled down the car window." Or something commonplace: "Felicitas slipped in behind her mother like a spoon." Felicitas is supposed to be brilliant (she studies Greek and Latin), but she seems to be the quintessential "good student"—a mirror reflecting exactly what it has been shown. If Felicitas has an original thought in the novel I missed it. It has been pointed out that the one character novelists can't create is someone who is smarter than themselves, but why do some novelists, Gordon for one, insist on giving us principal characters who are so much less intelligent than their creators?

There is a melodramatic scene in an abortionist's waiting room (Felicitas would get an F in contraception) and Felicitas flees, deciding to have the child "out of wedlock." She and her mother and her mother's circle of friends—those virgins and widows—retire to Cyprian's property (which the wealthiest of the women has provided for him) and the novel's third section commences in 1977, when Felicitas's child, Linda, is 7. Linda's thoughts occupy the last pages of the novel, and though she is but 7 she has a prose style similar to Gordon's. Nevertheless, those pages aside, the last section is the novel's strongest—at least some of the naïveté has departed.

Buried here and there throughout the book are traces of an interesting subject: Felicitas wonders, "Why should any man love her, having the face she had? She had no beauty, and she knew what beauty bought, had always known, although abstractly, for never in her life had anyone suggested that beauty would be her portion. Even as a child she had been valued for her sense." And later: "It must be that, like many plain women, I am overly impressed by beauty." If Felicitas has any claim on our sympathies it stems from this largely unexplored, but nonetheless acknowledged, injustice—far from those conferred by church, state and society: that women suffer more than men from the benefits so easily accrued by their more beautiful sisters (an issue largely undiscussed in feminist novels).

We leave Felicitas at around age 28, when she has become desperately resigned, full of bitter wisdom (think, all this because of one semester's worth of experience with men!). Felicitas doesn't practice what she may like to preach, though. The only men worth her regard are the beautiful. At the novel's conclusion, she is about to marry one, "the most desirable man in our area."

The Company of Women is not an advance—as I hoped it would be—over *Final Payments*: it stands alongside it. And though I am all for (relatively) young writers being encouraged, in this case, bad notices will not affect the novel's fate since it is already a success (Literary Guild dual main selection, condensed in *Redbook*, paperback sold to Ballantine) and it will not be denied an audience. A certain kind of success makes you immune in this country, immune even from criticism, because once that kind of success has been attained, you are provided with a moat sweetly filled with the juice from sour grapes and no one can wade across it unstained.

Nonetheless, *The Company of Women* is a disappointing piece of work that inexperienced readers may enjoy (not knowing the same ground has been covered so much better so many times before). Mary Gordon once said within my hearing that she couldn't create a relatively normal, heterosexual male character, one who didn't seem twisted, misshapen. With the evidence of her new novel, it seems she neglected to add that she has the same difficulty with her female characters as well. □

COMING: Andrew Kopkind on military and social expenditures; Nicholas von Hoffman on Time Inc.'s advice to America; Vivian Gornick on Doris Grumbach's *The Missing Person*.

Coming Distractions

DAVID L. AASEN

Attack on the Americas opens with a scene of frightened Nicaraguans scrambling for cover as a gunman (off-camera) sprays a crowded plaza with bullets. Next, a series of clips show Molotov cocktails exploding and people being struck by shrapnel. The perpetrators of this mayhem are Sandinist guerrillas and Cuban troops. "America is under attack," warns the narrator. "[The] weapons are terrorism, sabotage and assassination. The strategy comes from Moscow. . . . They are striking right in our own backyard." Over shots of a massacre site, the narrator intones: "This is the price of revolution." Cut to a grainy clip of Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev exhorting the U.S.S.R. Party Congress with what the narrator calls the "Communist timetable for world revolution. . . . Central America is their next objective." Then come the Red forces in action: MIGs screaming down runways, new TU-95 Bear Bombers flying in V formations "off the eastern coast of the United States" and surface-to-air missiles firing away.

Ronald Reagan and his United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick co-star in *Attack*. Together they offer a *Weltanschauung* that blames all unrest in Central America on the "Soviet campaign for world domination." Reagan says he is determined to exert U.S. force to meet the challenge. As an example of past failure, Kirkpatrick cites the case of the late Nicaraguan dictator, Anastasio Somoza. She argues that he should have been kept in power instead of being arbitrarily singled out as a human-rights violator by the Carter Administration, which delivered a fatal blow by imposing arms sanctions when he most needed U.S. support. "Somoza, despite his shortcomings, was an elected official—an anti-Communist," says the narrator. "Moreover, he was a West Point graduate."

In a cameo role, Henry Kissinger concurs. "We are way behind the Soviets

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in the power curve. They have taken over in Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada, and how what is happening in the Americas is very dangerous for us. . . . Mexico may be next." In which case, says Alfonso Robelo, an exile from Nicaragua, "you Americans will have to fight Communism on the banks of the Rio Grande River." The sole voice of dissent is Jimmy Carter's. "We are now free from our inordinate fear of Communism," he says. But bracketed by clips of high-stepping "enemy" soldiers, Carter is made to look like a modern Neville Chamberlain.

Attack deftly stitches together newsreel footage with the message that only an all-out military campaign will stop the "Communist plan to slash the Americas in half and surround the United States." Missing, of course, are any shots of Somoza's National Guard destroying barrios with artillery that wiped out entire sections of Managua and Esteli during the Nicaraguan civil war. Nor does the film bother to show the Nicaraguan Air Force strafing *campesinos* in the fields, or the victims of official torture. Instead, *Attack* frets at length over the threat posed to oil and other vital resources in Central America. The film ends with President Reagan warning that the Russians are coming. Then comes a pitch by the narrator for checks of $20 and up to buy more television time to help get *Attack*'s anti-Communist message across.

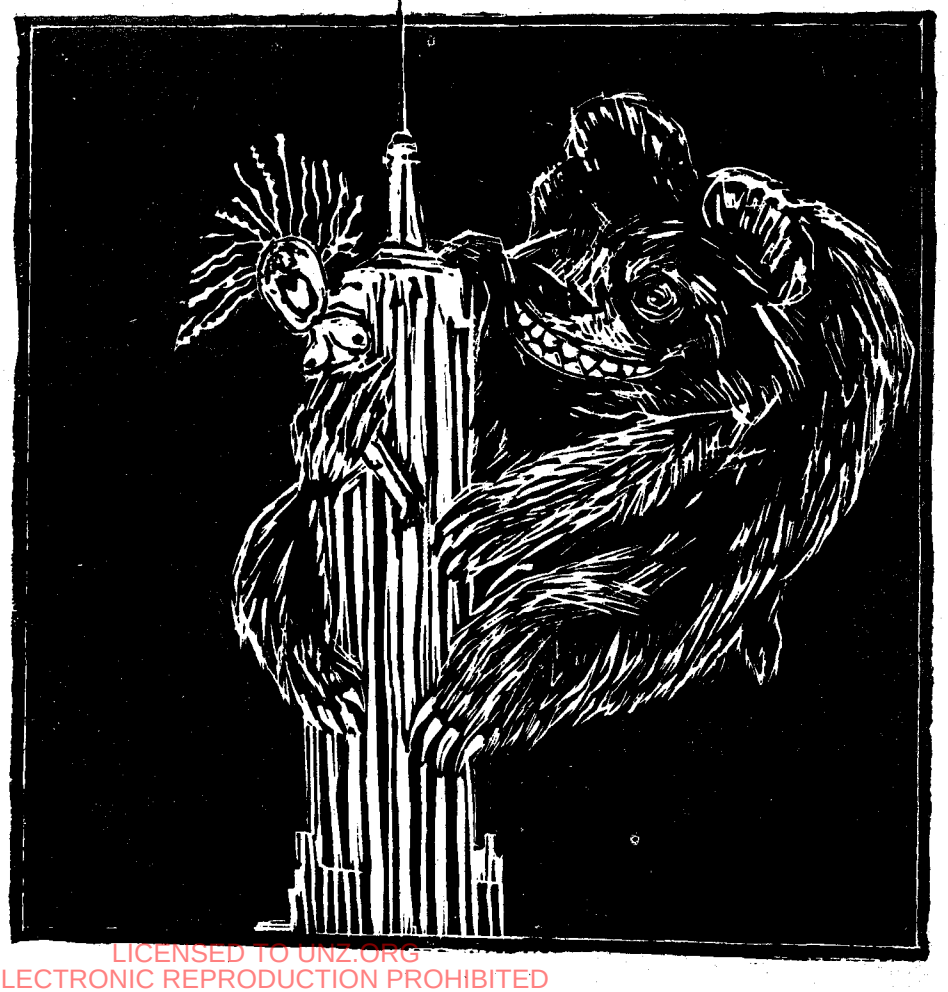
Attack is the newest release from the American Security Council, a right-wing military lobby fast becoming a major manipulator of U.S. foreign policy. A council spokesman says, "Our only hope for surviving Communism lies squarely with an outraged American public supporting President Reagan in implementing a national policy of 'Peace Through Strength.'" The A.S.C.'s budget is close to $2 million a year, money contributed by 230,000 dues-paying members. One and a half million dollars is being spent to air the thirty-minute color film on local stations around the country. The council produced *Attack* just after the election last year at a cost of $110,000. The A.S.C. expects to recoup quickly from sales of $345 a print and $35 daily rental fees. Of course, *Attack* is not primarily box office but propaganda. It is regularly shown to Congressmen and their staffs, veterans' clubs, schools and church groups.

In some circles, *Attack* is dubbed "son of *The SALT Syndrome*," after its precursor, a diatribe against the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty. That A.S.C. film, released in 1978, was seen by an estimated fifty million viewers during some 1,000 television airings. A council spokesman boasts that *The SALT Syndrome* was responsible for killing the arms control treaty last year. One Arms Control and Disarmament Agency official concedes this is not hyperbole, granting A.S.C.'s claim that it played a key role in turning public opinion against the treaty. "Of course I favored controlling nuclear weapons," says a George Washington University student who saw *Syndrome* at a campus showing. "But after seeing the film I'm more afraid of SALT than of nuclear war and don't think we can risk future treaties with the Russians."

Syndrome opens with ominous background music and a sequence of Soviet forces doing their stuff: "In the air, on the land and at sea—the Soviet armament buildup is the most rapid and intense since Hitler." (These clips of Red Army missile crews, etc., are from a Russian film, *I Serve the Soviet Union*.) In a photomontage, a small blonde girl taking her first steps is followed by a mushroom cloud exploding in the background. "The choice is ours, Soviet domination through nuclear superiority, or rejection of the SALT II treaty and the preservation of our American way of life," warns the narrator.

Syndrome also maintains that former "Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara started the United States on the road to unilateral disarmament [or the "SALT syndrome"] to encourage the Soviets to enter the arms talks." McNamara, of course, helped orchestrate the "missile gap" and, during his Pentagon tenure, deployed the ICBM Minuteman missile, launched the Polaris nuclear submarines and eventually MIRVed our ballistic missiles. There was also a rather vigorous campaign to contain Communism in Southeast Asia.

The film charges that the United States is dealing with the Russians on an unequal basis: "The Soviet Union builds new weapons without let-up, yet the U.S. missile force has been frozen at the 1967 level." Since 1967, the United States has doubled its total number of warheads and deployed the Poseidon and Trident missiles. Also, the American B-52 bombers have been upgraded with new guidance systems and air-launched cruise missiles. *Syndrome* plays the numbers game, ranking Soviet



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medium-range Badger bombers equally with our long-range B-52s to show that the Russian Air Force is superior to the U.S.A.F., and selectively categorizes naval statistics to the same effect.

The American Security Council began as a private intelligence organization for security-minded businessmen in Chicago in 1955. William Carroll, an ex-F.B.I. agent, set up the council for corporate sponsors, such as Sears, Roebuck, to keep track of individuals, groups and publications considered subversive. Labor leaders have long charged that A.S.C. files were used by member corporations as a "loyalty-security" reference to check up on the political interests of their employees and of job applicants. By 1960, A.S.C. brochures claimed that it maintained "one of the largest and most complete private files in the country covering subversives and their activities."

The council's board of directors is heavy with corporate clout. Thirteen leading executives head the list, among them Joseph Coors, president of the Coors brewery and Robert Galvin, chairman of Motorola Inc. The E. F. Hutton brokerage firm and the Hearst publishing empire are represented by vice presidents. Corporate contributions to the A.S.C.'s tax-exempt Education Foundation are spent on such "nonpolitical" activities as producing the film series and subsidizing a Washington Communications Center, which houses a computer-linked direct-mail system. The foundation's headquarters, an 850-acre estate near Boston, Virginia, is the site of frequent seminars conducted by ultraconservative lecturers for the edification of opinion leaders.

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Among the council's more insidious devices is its "National Security Voting Index" of Congressional voting on defense issues. It is used to target "anti-defense" members in their home districts. If a Representative voted against, say, importing Rhodesian chrome from Ian Smith's whites-only regime, this would be labeled an anti-defense vote to give the member a poor rating. The council stacks the deck further by using an in-house polling wrinkle called "Decision Making Information." By remarkable coincidence, D.M.I. always "proves" that Congressmen who oppose A.S.C. on defense issues also oppose the will of their constituents. At election time, the A.S.C.'s index is sent out in mass mailings to selected districts in an attempt to defeat anti-defense candidates. Local newspapers often publish the council's index as if it were a legitimate source of news. *Soldier of Fortune*, "the magazine for professional adventurers," runs the index as a regular feature for its mercenary readers.

In 1979, the council seized the day as SALT II neared completion. Led by retired Adm. Thomas Moorer, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the A.S.C. signed up 2,000 ex-generals and admirals to fight the treaty by exploiting their relationships on Capitol Hill and with the defense industry. The council organized a coalition for "Peace Through Strength" as a national lobby, with a $5 million budget goal and members ranging from the Moral Majority's Jerry Falwell to the Association of Retired Intelligence Officers. The coalition's resolution, calling for "U.S. military/technological *superiority* [my italics] over the Soviet Union," was adopted as the nuclear weapons plank of the 1980 Republican Party platform and has been signed by 250 members of Congress. In a single day, using a super-sophisticated mailing system, A.S.C. sent 250,000 first-class letters opposing SALT II to the constituents of Senators on the Foreign Relations Committee. Thousands signed these form letters and mailed them to their Senators. The council was also successful in influencing the Senate Armed Services Committee, which found that "the SALT II treaty is not in the security interest of the United States," thus endorsing the testimony of a parade of A.S.C. witnesses.

Edward Lansdale, the Air Force general who led the counterinsurgency program for the C.I.A. during the Vietnam War, thought the American Security Council could teach the techniques of "psycho-political warfare." Such arts as "black" propaganda and disinformation would be drummed in to operatives at a Government-subsidized "Freedom Academy." The graduates would then go out and help subvert wars of national liberation. No such institution exists (yet), but on the home front the A.S.C. is waging a very effective war against *our* national liberation. And *Attack* and *Syndrome* are just the beginning. Film projects now under consideration include *Resource Wars*, which rings the alarm over the vulnerability of vital minerals to revolutionaries, and *Space Wars*, which comes complete with animated laser-beam battles. But, doubtless, no Flash Gordon to our rescue. □

MUSIC.

DAVID HAMILTON

THE DAYS GROW SHORT: The Life and Music of Kurt Weill. *By Ronald Sanders. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 480 pp. $16.95.*

KURT WEILL IN EUROPE. *By Kim H. Kowalke. UMI Research Press (Studies in Musicology, No. 14). 585 pp. $34.50.*

WEILL: SILVERLAKE. *New York City Opera Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra. Julius Rudel, conductor. Nonesuch DB 79003. $23.96 (two disks).*

The first posthumous revival of Kurt Weill's German theater songs in the 1950s, took him to be principally a satellite of Bertolt Brecht, a skilled artificer of sophisticated musical sleaze shaped by the playwright into mordant indictments of contemporary capitalist society. One of the advantages of this interpretation was that it fitted comfortably with a sequel in which Weill—unlike Brecht—"sold out to American commercialism" when he came to this country.

In recent years, that view has been undermined by a wider acquaintance with Weill's German period, thanks especially to the research and advocacy of the British scholar and critic David Drew. Enough pre-Brecht music has been unearthed or recirculated to con-

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rm Weill's compositional powers and so to suggest that he had his own olitical commitments. They were different from Brecht's, but no less intense, which makes Weill's supposed onversion into a hack tunesmith for roadway much harder to explain.

Ronald Sanders's *The Days Grow hort*, the conscientiously researched ut rather flippantly written work of a rofessional biographer with little visile musical background, does not succeed in bringing the two Weills into conruence. On almost every page, this ook points up the obstacles facing a onmusician in dealing with the life of a omposer: he cannot give an accurate or oherent account of his subject's central ctivity; he cannot trace the formation nd development of compositional kills, appetites, achievements, and cannot soundly evaluate the claims of thers in such matters. Sanders often isconstrues what he has read, perhaps ven what he has heard—as in this particularly infelicitous dollop of "music istory":

> Stravinsky had done a virtual medley of songs in his *Symphony of Psalms* in 1930. . . . Hindemith . . . had completed a thoroughly romantic symphonic adaptation from his as yet uncompleted opera *Mathis der Mahler* [*sic*].

Nor is Sanders's sense of matters closer to home more certain. He tells us hat "My Ship" (*Lady in the Dark*, 1941) is Weill's "first theatre song to be cast in the thirty-two-bar convention of American popular songs." Here is a line of inquiry not beyond the reach of an intelligent amateur, and well worth pursuit. For the American Weill's persistent pressure upon the boundaries set by Tin Pan Alley's formulas surely shows his kinship with the Weill of the Berlin scores. But Sanders does not pursue the matter. And in any case, even that initial observation is wrong, overlooking the least overlookable of Weill's songs: "September Song" (*Knickerbocker Holiday*, 1938) is a textbook example of the thirty-two-bar AABA pattern.

Though it reports some hitherto unpublished biographical facts, Sanders's book will hardly fill the space long reserved on many shelves for David Drew's long-promised study. Fortunately, Drew's article on Weill for *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (St. Martin's) does set forth the main lines of his case for perceiving in Weill's Broadway scores a significant survival of the craftsmanship, innovation and social commitment of the German period; it will be good to have this at full length someday.

In the meantime, Kim Kowalke's study of the European works, a reworked doctoral dissertation, pins down the musical characteristics of the apprentice and experimental works, though offering less detailed treatment of the most significant and successful ones. Much of this will be heavy going for the layman, although the book contains a solid professional biography, a useful catalogue of works and a selection of Weill's essays in translation. (In view of the asking price, the physical appearance of this book must be deplored: it looks as if it had been designed by a computer for the delectation of other computers.)

If Weill remains elusive, so, often, do the works. George Steiner once asked of the Weill-Brecht songs, "Will they long survive the voice of Lotte Lenya?" The answer to that question is certainly "yes"; we have had convincing and (more important) nonderivative interpretations by Martha Schlamme, by Meryl Streep in the 1977 production of *Happy End*, and by Teresa Stratas in the Metropolitan Opera's recent *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*. But bringing the entire works, as distinct from the songs, onto the stage is a different problem, for they are intimately tied to the cultural occasions and theatrical institutions of Weimar Germany, for many of which we have no parallels.

First case in point: the *Mahagonny* production at the Met (scheduled to return in March, and to be broadcast on April 6). None of the other singers matched Stratas's combination of vocal presence and interpretive edge. Astrid Varnay, the Begbick, had the inner resources, but no longer the control to project them over the footlights. The wonderful Met orchestra, under James Levine—surpassingly compelling in the more-or-less contemporary but oh-so-different textures of *Wozzeck* and *Lulu*—frequently inflected *Mahagonny*'s rhythms too stiffly and heavily. The earlier scenes missed the sheer fun of the music; only as the dance elements gave way to more rigorous chorale and march material did the music begin to tell. Visually, much of the action lacked focus, spread out over the vast stage, and bleeding tension away into the set's empty spaces. The proof of noncommunication, I think, was that nobody was offended—and, after all, the patrons of the Metropolitan Opera are certainly the sort of people *Mahagonny* was meant to offend. Somehow, the work had been so monumentalized and abstracted that it didn't touch anybody anymore.

Second case in point: the New York City Opera production of *Silverlake*, now recorded in full by Nonesuch. *Mahagonny*, despite some press commentary to the contrary, is a real opera, with continuous music demanding fully trained voices. Weill's final German work, his elaborate musical score for Georg Kaiser's play *Der Silbersee*, was intended for "singing actors" in a theatrical company with reasonable orchestral and choral resources, such as existed then in Germany. First produced in February 1933, when Hitler was already Chancellor, *Der Silbersee* was quickly driven from the stage and has never been revived in its original form anywhere. Like *Mahagonny*, though in a gentler tone, it has much to say about the effects of political and economic circumstances on human behavior—but it's a long and wordy play, with only about an hour's worth of music.

The City Opera version, produced by Harold Prince, "fixes" that problem. Hugh Wheeler's new book drastically trivializes Kaiser's thesis, scuttling the political and economic context. Lys Symonette has translated the lyrics into broken English, and she has cluttered up the score with interpolated —and stylistically disparate—music from earlier Weill works, thereby obscuring the uniquely austere lyricism of the proper *Silbersee* music. *Der Silbersee* was an act of political and artistic courage; *Silverlake* is just another slick Prince entertainment. Even so, the music occasionally cuts through with eloquence, sounding the accents of compassion that have been expunged from the play—although the superbly militant "Hunger Song," evidently impossible to sanitize, has simply been omitted!

Ironically, it is this perversion that has been recorded by Nonesuch, which could have made a much better selection: the City Opera's admirable production of *Street Scene*, Weill's 1947 opera based on Elmer Rice's play. The original Broadway venue of this work has left traces: the absurdly extended dance sequence, and the graduation-day song

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that evokes too well those gooey Rodgers and Hammerstein numbers that already seem to be unconscious self-parody. But the City Opera wisely did not overproduce or over-sing it.

The nonoperatic American works will not be so fortunate; the best of the songs are fine indeed, but the greatest strengths of a score such as *Lady in the Dark* reside in the totality. These strengths can only be appreciated in the original form, which is dependent on the "dated" books that opera houses invariably congeal into frozen custard and Broadway revivals "improve," so that the original occasions for the music have evaporated. The ambiguity of Weill's position as a composer—relatively populist in Europe, relatively elitist in America—remains the problematic inheritance of his theater works, which at all events should be clearly labeled "Special Handling." □

THEATER.

STEPHEN HARVEY

Piaf

Late into the second half of *Piaf*, the newest tragicomic *divertissement* from London, Jane Lapotaire does a splendidly harrowing impersonation of someone in the throes of drug withdrawal. First her spindly arms are seized by seismic tremors; then her torso convulses in a speeded-up Oceana Roll. With a thump, Lapotaire sprawls on her back on the floor of the stage, heaving with a pelvic thrust, her garters exposed to the dull glare of a wintry spotlight. After a three-second interval of repose, Lapotaire bounds nimbly to her feet, in full view of the audience. Unruffled by her rigors, she's on to the next routine, a calm interview with Piaf's agent to arrange for an upcoming tour of the provinces.

It was then that I remembered a priceless moment from Christopher Durang's play of a few seasons back, *A History of the American Film*. This was the vignette, likewise well into Act Two, devoted to an Academy Awards presentation of the mid-1950s, in which five movie divas in the feigned ravages of alcoholism, psychosis and/or grave physical infirmity stagger their way to the podium to stake their claims for an Oscar. Durang was just kidding around, but he certainly knew his celluloid lore.

If there's one apparently sure-fire Pop culture specialty, it's the saga of the life-battered chanteuse, from *I'll Cry Tomorrow* through *The Rose*. The names and locales employed may change, but once a subject is found whose life duly approximates the myth, the conventions of the genre are as immutable as Kabuki. You start with the back-alley guttersnipe who gets that big break out of nowhere, segue into the acclaim-and-lucre montage, then dissolve to the long descent into Lousier Lives through Chemistry—the inescapable price of success. Along the way, there's the requisite succession of leeches (usually male) exploiting her both personally and professionally, counterpointed with a brief idyll with her one true love—also known as The Man That Got Away. And always there's the limelight, succoring and devouring her at the same time. The real purpose behind all this never alters, either. For all the lamentations shed vicariously for its ostensible subject, this breed of melodrama exists only to showcase the big fat gifts of the actress drafted to reincarnate her.

In the past, this formula has been best exploited in the movies, but Pam Gems's stage biography of the Little Sparrow offers the complete trite résumé, and then muffs the payoff. *Piaf* consists of a series of punchy blackouts that cover the nearly three decades from the singer's discovery in the streets to her demise. During its course, Gems tosses in a few optional ingredients as well, such as the cameo appearance by the performing legend whose path crossed that of the protagonist. In this case, it's Marlene Dietrich, sauntering in from time to time to give the feckless Edith some sage advice; unaccountably, she's played by an Amazon who more closely resembles Anita Ekberg with a bad head cold. Gems has the second-rate scenarist's flair for turning factual tragedy into factitious hokum, her principal tool being the use of telegraphic foreshadowing. No sooner, say, does Edith's beloved boxer Marcel Cerdan casually mention that he'll catch that earlier flight after all, than the Plymouth Theater's sound system is invaded with the whine of a plane swooping into a crash landing. (At this point, the huge neon squiggle dominating the bare set shifts from red to blue, as it does whenever Piaf has one of her car accidents, or someone close to her dies.)

When it's time to be serious, Gems's dialogue is terse and ponderously to th point. "Technique, Piaf—trust it, says Marlene. "I'm just a guy with fist, Ede," says Marcel. "I'm her 'cause I like you," says Jocko, Charles Aznavour *manqué*, and he penultimate protégé. "I just want to b near you—it makes me happy," mumbles Theo, the boy who lightene the burden of Piaf's last years. Piaf i similarly eloquent, albeit pitched to more hysterical key. "They all want bloody piece," she moans, her life second-act shambles; "My type's dyin out," she mourns, facing the advent o Pop stars more at home in recordin studios than music halls.

The author's main innovation is t punctuate all this with ribald bursts o scatological slapstick. The apparent gis is that middle-class decorum mean nothing to a gutter gamine like Piaf— even international celebrity couldn' shake her defiant loyalty to her roots Thus, with a rebellious smile, the teen aged Edith mockingly pees on the floo after being rebuked for drinking out o a finger bowl; later she blithely lends a hand to girlhood chum Toine (Zo Wanamaker) when the latter has a nast bout with constipation—merely mimed this time, by Lapotaire's co-star. Years afterward, the now middle-aged anc determinedly respectable Toine pays the wracked Edith a visit. In the interim she's acquired a responsible, hard-working husband whose trade, Toine reports, is "sanitary supplies." "No shit!" exclaims Edith. At this point, I began to wonder whether Piaf's instincts to *épater la bourgeoisie* weren't merely a convenient ruse, so that Gems could titillate those bourgeois in attendance at the Plymouth.

Briskly paced by director Howard Davies, *Piaf* alternates these antic touches and the requisite grim interludes with strobe-light velocity. This approach gives the proceedings a surface liveliness, but it's so arbitrarily schizoid that Piaf herself becomes a twitching abstraction. Since Gems seems bent on resuscitating all the clichés of the genre, she may as well deliver up the cheap pathos that goes with the territory. Yet whenever her Piaf crumples with some new crisis, we're deprived of the time to reflect on her sorrow because in a flash Gems shifts her to a pose of delirious vivacity.

It's one thing to imply that Piaf was a creature of mercurial emotions continually warring for dominance beneath

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her thin-skinned defenses. But Gems underscores this with such quicksilver relentlessness that I suspect there's a higher (Brechtian?) purpose at work—the desire to turn Piaf from pitiable flesh to telling symbol, precisely of what never does become clear. She's not a victim of her lowly caste nor a martyr to the materialistic designs of her camp followers, for all the scorn pointed in that direction; the Piaf we see does a very nice job of obliterating her life without the need of much outside help. Despite her fitful generosity, this Piaf is a creature of near-complete self-absorption, which signifies little beyond her own personal pathology. The author doesn't just succeed in stripping Piaf of all sentimentality—she transforms her into a clockwork epiphany doll, dutifully grinning and grimacing on cue.

The effect is so distancing that *Piaf* ends up by committing the one unpardonable sin of the show-biz bio: it sabotages the star. Jane Lapotaire clearly possesses all the equipment needed to create a shattering Piaf portrait. While her voice is just a serviceable instrument, with each song she conjures up Piaf's ghost with stark, supple phrasing and commandingly spare gestures. Unlike the fictional Piaf, Lapotaire doesn't need to be admonished to remember her technique—every fiber is trained to do her bidding. A taut reed of energy as the youthful Edith, Lapotaire tilts vertiginously from the hip when playing the deteriorating star, as elongated fingers extend feebly to claw at the microphone or banish the pain dancing before her fierce, woebegone eyes. Zoe Wanamaker is a wonderfully poker-faced foil for her pyrotechnics, and during their scenes together, playwright Gems soft-pedals the hyperbole long enough for a genuinely human dimension to emerge.

Elsewhere it's all flash and no incandescence. Three times we get Lapotaire's graphic mainlining number: thrice in succession she makes a lunge for the mike and strikes out. She takes so many dives that after a while you're past registering Piaf's indomitable will and disintegrating powers—that body up there on the stage can clearly take *anything*, and Lapotaire's doggedness becomes a kind of sick joke. *Piaf* reduces an unmistakable artist into a purveyor of show-stopping thrills, admirably executed. Still, there's always a market for this kind of high-wire routine, so long as you don't give the game away by playing it for laughs. When Christopher Durang made fun of such trite excess, the result eked out a scant three weeks on Broadway. Done straight, as it is in *Piaf*, it should be good for a year's run, at least. □

FILMS.

ROBERT HATCH

Napoleon

Anyone who still doubts the craziness of show business may readily be converted to the prevailing view by considering the eight-performance engagement of Abel Gance's *Napoleon*, this month and last, at Radio City Music Hall in New York. It was sold out for every show at a ticket range of $10 to $25, was seen by some 50,000 people and grossed about $800,000. And what those people saw, what evoked from them cheers unprecedented in a movie house, was a four-hour, fifty-four-year-old epic that swirls and rages around a man who, though one of history's immortals, is scarcely a leading figure in American folklore.

What drew the crowds was in part the boldness, verging on eccentricity, of the enterprise. They came to find out what it was about this dinosaur of a film that had persuaded its backers to rent one of the biggest houses in town and engage the sixty-instrument American Symphony Orchestra—conducted by Carmine Coppola, who had composed the marathon score. (Francis Ford Coppola, be it said in his honor, put up much of the prerequisite cash for the New York run.) And in part the public was attracted by the almost miraculous reappearance of a "lost" masterpiece. It had been a feat of archeology, a science which, above all others, catches the lay imagination.

Napoleon had not existed in anything resembling complete form for decades; its reels, in several formats and varying states of preservation, were scattered across the whole of Europe. Kevin Brownlow, the British film historian, began to reconstruct the work in 1968, thought he had put together everything available by 1972, but soon thereafter found an additional two hours of film in a private collection. He believes other bits and pieces may still turn up, but the version of *Napoleon* now being shown is substantially the work that Gance released in 1927. (The director himself eliminated two hours of footage after the initial run.) Now, most conspicuously missing are parts of the three-screen "Polyvision" segments, some of which Gance destroyed in despair. The picture originally opened in Paris only months before *The Jazz Singer* arrived in New York—ending, almost overnight, the era of the silent film.

But if these considerations suggest why so many people paid such high prices to fill those thousands of seats, they do not explain why they stayed in those seats for four hours, raising their voices in praise. *Napoleon* is a commanding work of art and a formidable physical experience. At times, it moves with the mindless force of a natural disaster, churning men and women by the countless hundreds into total disarray. At others, it focuses down to catch precisely the flick of an eye. The most active member of Gance's company is the camera itself. He strapped it to a galloping horse, suspended it on overhead wires, swung it on a pendulum and even tied it around the waist of a girl dancing at the Bal des Victimes, where Napoleon first discovers his love for Josephine de Beauharnais.

Compared to modern cinematography, Gance's means were as primitive as the tintype, but he was so far ahead of his time that in some respects he is still in the vanguard. He made a practice of cutting close-ups into scenes of mass excitement, to suggest the individual passions that produce mob violence. He superimposed images to achieve a simultaneous expression of disparate impulses that is as succinct as poetry. Repeatedly, he slips in a flashback to indicate what is being thought while something else is being said. It is a common enough tactic today, but Gance used it with uncommon dexterity; often it is no more than a blink, passing as quickly as does the association through the character's mind. And throughout, his black-and-white film (Jules Kruger was his director of photography) has a richness of texture, a blaze of light, an enticement of shadow, an appreciation for the feel of rock, of fabric, of flesh that you can almost touch with your hands. Color has obvious virtues, and it is being used with greater finesse year by year, but on balance black and white is still the more sensuous medium.

However, if *Napoleon* is a superb

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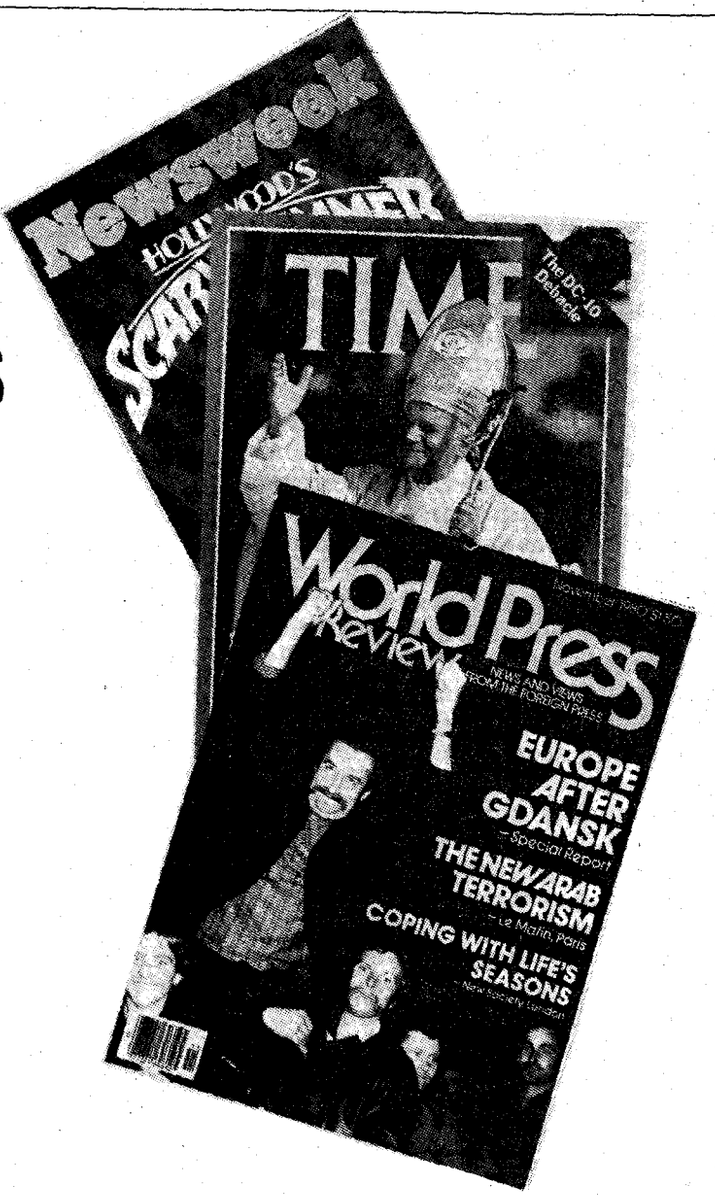

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film, it is also one that was made more than half a century ago. Cinema is the only form of theatrical production that exists time; plays, operas and ballets are always seen in the present. We remember old performances as they looked to us then; we can see *Napoleon* now. If we had encountered it in 1927, it would have looked quite different. Styles of direction and acting change almost as rapidly as fashions in dress. With the screen, moreover, there was the great turning point of 1927. *Napoleon*, like all the films before it, was a dumbshow, a pantomime, and the level of acting can be seen as absurdly histrionic. People start back, throw up their arms, goggle their eyes, point menacing fingers, clench their fists and grind their teeth. Ridiculous, we say, having for decades gone to the movies with our ears as well as our eyes. But, in fact, those silent actors had perfected a splendid style. If you think of such a cast as dancers, or mimes, their manner seems not peculiar but the eloquent language of their art.

There are not a great many subtitles in *Napoleon* (nowhere near the number required to make a modern foreign-language picture comprehensible), and a lot of them are general statements to introduce new episodes. The action is often boisterously confused and the relationships are sometimes complex, but you are almost never at a loss to follow the plot, and when you are, it is probably because some bit of footage has not yet been found.

It must be added, however, that in *Napoleon* one encounters a director whose powers of invention and execution were extraordinary and who delighted in showing what he could conceive and deliver. It follows that when Gance liked a scene on which he had worked particularly hard he let it run its course, however long that might be. Unfortunately, the film's opening scene is an example of this self-indulgence, and alerts us for others to come. It seems to take place in real, rather than dramatic, time—at least I do not recall a school recess snowball fight that lasted much more than half an hour. Its purpose is to establish that Bonaparte showed precocious signs of courage and generalship and it establishes that most abundantly.

The mass scenes, the battles and the pandemonium that marked the recurring crises of the French Revolution are the passages (despite what was said above about the individuality that Gance injected into them) that most noticeably overstay their time. A superb exception is the long sequence in which the director cuts back and forth between Napoleon battling a storm in a small boat, as he escapes from his enemies in Corsica, and the Convention in Paris roaring its demands for the heads of Robespierre and his fellow executioners. As the waves seethe ever higher, tossing the fisherman's skiff to almost certain destruction, the outraged citizenry surges ever closer to the person of its late, hated master. It is a night when the future of France, as of all Europe, hangs doubly in the balance. I don't know what historical truth there is to that coincidence, but as film excitement it would be hard to beat. It is the high moment of the film, the supreme example of how Gance could raise tension to the breaking point again and again, each time forcing it a notch higher.

If I have taken some time to arrive at the figure of Napoleon himself, it is because he seems to me the least successful aspect of the picture. Even allowing for the screen conventions of the 1920s, I can scarcely credit Gance's portrait of the man. The actor he chose, Albert Dieudonné, satisfies my conception of how Napoleon looked, though he seems a bit old for the part: Napoleon was 27 at the point when the movie takes leave of him. And Gance has schooled the man to maintain a countenance so impassive (Buster Keaton was never more deadpan) that his faintest expression, in close-up, of a smile or frown is dramatically explosive. But Gance also encouraged Dieudonné to strut like a popinjay, and strapped to his waist a sword too long for his legs, thus turning him out as the "little Napoleon" who must have become a cliché long before 1927. Worse, he endows his hero with a hypnotic gaze, like that of the eagle which is seen to hover over his destiny. The most voluble of scoffers, the most passionate of enemies are seized with catalepsy when Napoleon's eye fixes on them; once released from his spell, they turn humbly to obey his will. That sort of thing is all very well for a portrayal of Rasputin; attributed to a serious historical figure, it becomes humbug.

Nor do I get much nourishment from Gance's estimate of Bonaparte's character. In the program for the 1927 première, he set down his appreciation of Napoleon as a great tragic figure, a Prometheus. He described his hero as a man "who is being dragged towards war by a strong web of circumstances and who is trying all the time and in vain to escape." He went to war, thinks Gance, to establish universal peace—but so did every conqueror from Genghis Khan to Hitler: *their* peace for *their* world. And though on more than one occasion Napoleon refused a military assignment (an obstinacy that landed him in prison and almost cost his life), the film does not record that he rejected any mission where he was offered a free hand and in which he saw the chance for glory.

If Napoleon hated war, Dieudonné does not give that impression; he acts a man insatiate for power and contemptuous of lesser men who aspire to it. As he exhorts the ragged and hungry Army of the Alps to follow him into the soft, rich valley of Italy, a subtitle calls Napoleon "the tempter." One may, of course, suppose that he was using distasteful means to further his apocalyptic vision, and perhaps if Gance had been able to make the films he projected to complete the story (this picture ends in 1796; the Battle of Waterloo was fought in 1815), the tragedy would have become explicit. But the image we have is that of a little man who sought to bestride the narrow world; it is not an interesting or original view of Napoleon.

Gance ended his program notes with this statement: "And the cinema, for me, is the climax of life." Offhand, that sounds like bosh, but for him it is almost certainly the literal truth. *Napoleon* is not really about revolution, or glory, or megalomaniac visions of the promised land. It is about itself—about the power of images on a screen to lift the members of an audience out of their accustomed ways and set their blood coursing to its rhythm. Gance said that one of his aims was "to make the spectator become an actor," and in that he wonderfully prevails: it would be impossible, I think, to hold oneself back from his four-hour revel. His film was the climax of the silent era and the climax of his professional career. Gance is now 91, having survived to know that *Napoleon* also defies the passing of time.

Plans are being made to show the film in other cities across the country and perhaps to bring it back to the Music Hall in the fall. □

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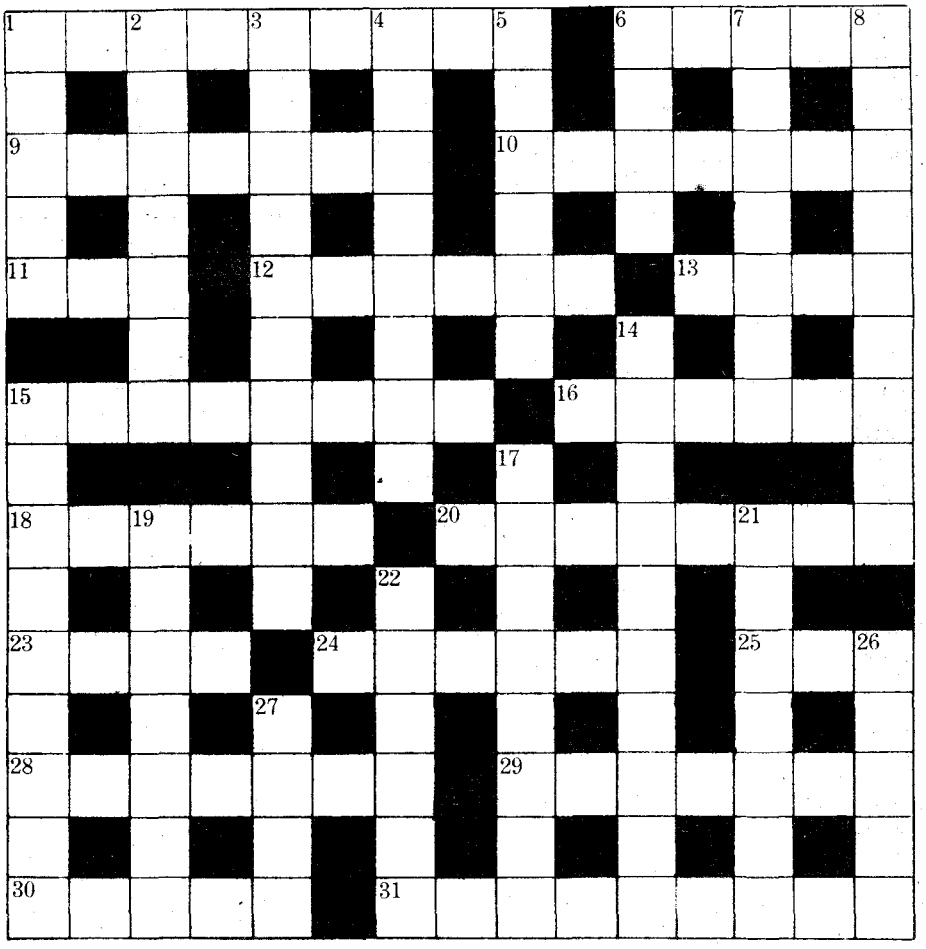
SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1856

ACROSS: 1 and 6 All well and good; 10 and 26 Drawing lots; 11 Chasten; 12 Pulsates; 13 Table; 15 Eider; 17 In general; 19 Infringes; 21 Sacks; 23 Owned; 24 Methodic; 27 Tail-end; 28 Antonio. DOWN: 1 Aids; 2 Leagued; 3 Emits; 4 and 29 Lightning rods; 7 October; 8 Danger list; 9 Partings; 14 Helicopter; 16 Reindeer; 18 Gas attack; 20 Fancied; 22 Chianti; 24 Media; 25 Octet.

Crossword Puzzle No. 1857

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 How they might have made a charge at a party gathering which includes the works. (2,1,6)
6 See 1 down
9, 20 and 27 down A good-looking vessel, but there's a catch to it! (A fine mess, in more than one way!) (1,6,6,2,4)
10 To be descriptively clear, it's a sort of factor in cigar-making. (7)
11 and 12 See 25 across
13 If 4 are this, it might now be considered sexist, which is sort of sad. (4)
15 and 19 down How to make 11 sequent? (3,5,7)
16 Operatically speaking, he wasn't just a little shaver. (6)
18 Being a brewer, you might possibly find a poet at this. (6)
20 See 9 across.
23 Ornamental braiding on a short coat, or a little jumper. (4)
24 The temper of steel, by the sound of it. (6)
25, 11 and 12 Is he pictured in literature as having a price on his head? (3,3,6)
28 The motto of Prince Charles is sort of hid in a nice disguise. (3,4)
29 Brought up well, and about to have property, but if you take off with this you might get 11. (7)
30 Proving the world necessarily has a change of heart. (5)
31 In parenthesis, makes a lot of noise in a four-poster, for example. (9)

DOWN

1 and 6 across It's set to go off prior to the uprising. (5,5)
2 Cut down a newly-married person with a thousand, as they say, close to the bottom. (7)
3 If a play were made about Yorick, would someone have to? (3,3,4)
4 Yale is wrong to have a difficult test—for babies, no doubt. (8)
5 Worked persistently, but might be thrown or kept at the same level. (6)
6 Is it only a guy who can get such a cracked skin? (4)
7 Lamb gets a bad hop first, but it's in character. (7)
8 Started the game, perhaps. (With a good team, you wouldn't want a player to be so.) (6,3)
14 Not much modern musical entertainment where Lorelei Lee came from! (6,4)
15 How the Nile might have been formed by not following the rules? (3,2,4)
17 Derived from the verb *tear*, it shows what man has in common with higher animals. (8)
19 See 15 across
21 Do, and do again—what it makes is this! (7)
22 Used to get licked in school, but probably not very often nowadays. (3,3)
26 Over 500, following a possible need. (5)
27 See 9 across.

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

X-523

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A Third Interview With The 115-Year-Old Magazine

Your mellow wisdom, gained from your 115 years of weekly existence, has enlightened us in the past. Now I'm wondering if there is some secret of the meaning of life that you would like to share with us?

Secrets? You want secrets, go file a Freedom of Information Act request. I don't believe in secrets. That's why I proposed the Spy Library.

The Spy Library? What's that?

It's an open-shelf library containing all of our current secrets. It would be open to all spies who can prove a sincere interest in espionage. They could search through the card catalogues and check out any secrets they like.

But I don't understand. Wouldn't that be helping them do their work?

Oh, no. You see, under the present classification system the Government does the spies' work for them. Now our secrets are labeled according to their importance—Top Secret, for the really big stuff, down to Confidential, for small-potatoes secrets. In the Spy Library, the foreign agents would have to figure out for themselves what's important.

I see. Do you have any other ideas like that?

Oh sure. All the time. My Swiss missile bank, for example. It would solve the problem of stationing U.S. missiles in Europe. We'd deposit them in Swiss bank accounts, and the trusty Swiss bankers would hide them in various Alps. As everybody knows, you can trust a Swiss banker to keep a secret. So the Europeans wouldn't have to worry about missiles on their soil and the Soviet Union wouldn't feel threatened.

I thought *The Nation* was a serious magazine of current affairs and the arts. Those ideas sound like *Mad* magazine.

My friend, it's a mad world. Sometimes the most outrageous ideas make more sense than what our Government is selling. Take the MX missile. Only Alfred E. Neuman could have dreamed that one up. Most of the time, though, I just try to make sense out of the world as it comes. And if *you* subscribe to *The Nation*, maybe you can too. Just fill out that handy coupon over on the right.

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